## Ten Years After 1968

*avid Riesman on the Legacy of a Turbulent Decade*

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# THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 1, 1978

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## TNR Goes Hollywood

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# TRB

from Washington
July 1, 1978

## Verisimilitude

Ever notice how a good horror story always begins with some trivial detail to give it authenticity and verisimilitude? So let's start with the garbage dump the state has recently closed down in Hyden, Kentucky, the little mountain coal town to which Richard Nixon is coming, July 2, to help dedicate the "Richard M. Nixon Recreation Center." He's scheduled to come all the way from California. Yep, they're not dedicating many parks and centers to the ex-president these days and he probably hopes it will start a trend, and maybe sell some copies of *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* ($19.95) in which he tells how fine he always was and how unfair everybody else always was to him.

My spies in Hyden tell me the "I like Nixon" T-shirts are going like hotcakes at Campbell's Drug Store, and that discarded Coke bottles and tin cans and broken down cars are being cleared off the roads and that they may even find a cannon to give a 21-gun salute. Never mind the hassle with the state over that garbage dump, or the little misunderstanding with the Feds over the phenomenal 2000 absentee ballots that appear to have been cast in the last election under the benevolent eye of county judge-executive C. Allen Muncy, who is the Mayor Daley of Hyden (pop. 500), county seat of Leslie County (pop. 13,000). That's a lot of absentee ballots, though, even for an area as politically easy-going as southeastern Kentucky.

As I said at the beginning I am just throwing Nixon in to give verisimilitude to other parts of the story. Money from Nixon's "New Federalism" revenue-sharing program buoyed Hyden in 1974 just as county judge Muncy took office, so why shouldn't the county's executive body call the new $2.6 million park after its benefactor? Watergate . . . what of it? It was just a figment of those nattering nabobs of negativism (as Bill Safire and Spiro Agnew brightly called them). Leslie County is 80 percent Republican (or so the ballots are counted anyway), so why shouldn't it lead in Nixon's rehabilitation?

Everybody wants rehabilitation. The distant relative of the Nixon episode in Hyden (to strike a gloomier note) is the episode of the Nazis in Chicago who, last week, negotiated a switch from a parade in full regalia through the predominantly Jewish suburb of Skokie (called a "village"—population 70,000) for a demonstration in Marquette Park on July 9. Either way they had achieved part of their object beforehand: to taunt democratic forebearance, to attract attention and to create dissention—particularly if they could provoke a riot from the overreaction of opponents, including the militant Jewish Defense League.

There is something tragi-comical about Nixon looking around for a place to appear in, no matter how petty; there is nothing funny at all in the detestable Nazis, demanding free speech in a world where they would like to suppress it. One is appalled to discover that people exist who would even be identified with the loathsome gas-chamber cult. Then one is caught up in a basic problem of democracy. How much free speech can there be? How much toleration is possible in the nuclear age?

Let us proceed step by step. The American Civil Liberties Union has lost 30,000 members as well as financial support by arguing that free speech is indivisible and by supporting the Chicago Nazis in court. The ACLU held a National Convocation on Free Speech in New York this month to defend their idealistic position. They quoted the noble dissents of Justices Black and Douglas in the 5-to-4 Supreme Court decision in *Beauharnais* v. *Illinois* in 1952, a decision where the majority upheld a sweeping Illinois anti-defamation law. Black wrote, "History indicates that urges to do good have led to the burning of books and even to the burning of 'witches.'" And Douglas wrote,

> *The free trade in ideas which the Framers of the Constitution visualized disappears. In its place there is substituted a new orthodoxy—an orthodoxy that changes with the whims of the age or the day, an orthodoxy which the majority by solemn judgment proclaims to be essential to the safety, welfare, security, morality, or health of society. Limits are drawn—limits dictated by expediency, political opinion, prejudices or some other desideratum of legislative action.*

It all sounds pretty fine. It goes back to Justice Holmes who, at 88, insisted that free thought is "freedom for the thought that we hate." There is something splendidly symbolic in seeing the ACLU, at cost to itself, defending the right of the ugly toads of the Nazi Party to swell their warty throats and croak as they see fit. I suppose I would have to go along with the ACLU, theoretically at least.

But I wonder whether, in a few years, we shall not look back at these happy days and say what a dream world we were living in. Certainly I hope not. It is a prospect that few have the courage to face. It is a horror story best preceded with something light and trivial. The fact is that before long the advance of technology may deprive us of some of the options we so highly cherish.

Suppose, for example, that Hollywood followed its jolly movies of *Star Wars* and *Jaws* with a thriller on how a nationality group, or a terrorist gang, gets the atomic bomb. Exciting, eh? Of course it would all turn out right in the end with the villains circumvented. But suppose in real life the moment arrives when the fantastic becomes the possible. Would the FBI wait for a minute to tap every wire in sight to frustrate the threat? And here is what the US Office of Technology Assessment said in its prepublication draft of "Nuclear Proliferation and Safeguards," in April 1977 (diluted a bit in the final document): ". . . A small group of people, none of whom have ever had access to classified literature, could possibly design and build a crude nuclear explosive device. They would not necessarily require a great deal of technological equipment or have to undertake any experiments. Only modest machine-shop facilities that could be contracted for without exciting suspicion would be required." Cost?—"a fraction of a million dollars." Experts?—No; "The group would have to include a person capable of searching and understanding the technical literature in several fields, and a 'jack-of-all-trades' technician."

I like that jack-of-all-trades bit. Earlier this month the Energy Department put on the classified list a 400-page paper on how to build a bomb by Harvard graduate Dimitri Rotow, 22, economics major, who says he got his information from the Library of Congress. Authorities slapped a "Q" (nuclear security) clearance on Rotow's paper and told him not to discuss it. But how can you bottle up knowledge, and where will our civil liberties be, day after tomorrow? Nixon in Hyden, Kentucky, will seem like the Age of Innocence.



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# Correspondence

## Perón revisited

*To the editors:*

Peter Witonski's article ("The Legacy of Perón," *TNR*, June 17), while making some valid points about Argentina's ex-president, is so riddled with factual errors and distortions and is so tainted by partisan passion that it nicely characterizes most North American writing about Perón.

To set the record straight: (1) Perón did not dub his followers *descamisados*, his political opponents did. (2) Perón's enemies have attributed to him the quote on Mussolini without ever providing the source. (3) In 1944 Perón never advised his countrymen to turn their eyes to Hitler. (4) Isabel Perón's origins have been fully documented. They are "mysterious" only to Mr. Witonski. (5) Isabel Perón was never a "bar girl," (6) nor a "hostess in clip joints." (7) José Lopez Rega was not a "traffic cop," but rather a police corporal assigned to the gate of the presidential residence in the early 1950s. (8) Lopez Rega did not tell Perón what to say during the latter's third presidency. Perón made his own speeches and statements. (9) Argentine presses did not break down from printing money in 1975-76. Argentine pesos were printed abroad. (10) Perón was never minister of labor. (11) Perón did not transform the C.G.T. into a powerful central labor union until after he became president. (12) Far from lacking attractiveness, determination and ambition, Juan Perón in the early 1940s exuded a peculiarly Latin sex appeal and worked with singleminded effectiveness to attain power. (13) When Perón became president, Evita was 27, not 25. (14) Evita had little, if anything, to do with the labor reforms Perón decreed, at least until 1948, when most of them were already in effect. (15) Hector Campora was a dentist, but hardly left-wing. He was Perón's most faithful lap dog. (16) Campora did empty the jails of political prisoners—pursuant to a demand Perón had made in late 1972 on the military government. (17) Isabel Perón is not being held at a resort for officers and their wives. (18) Perón's body was not mummified or embalmed, (19) nor is it in a "secret vault" (20) nor does it lie next to Evita's corpse.

One might also quarrel with Mr. Witonski's reference to Perón as a "brutal tyrant" who set off a poisonous "reign of terror," his identification of Perón with Franco, and his claim that "General Videla is clearly popular with the bulk of the people."

*Joseph A. Page*
*Washington, DC*

## I'd rather be truckin'

*To the editors:*

In your May 27 issue ("Doctors and Truck Drivers") you contrast the relative incomes of teamsters and doctors. Let me contrast the relative incomes of teamsters, doctors and journeyman college teachers. I recently met a clinical psychologist with a PhD who was regretfully quitting teaching. At a well-known state university she was making $12,500 per year. Even single, she has trouble living on her pay. (Outrageous? Ask an unmarried doctor or teamster to live on $12,500 a year.)

One more note on doctors *v.* teachers. Doctors' administrators work *for* the doctors; it is their job to help doctors carry out *their* jobs. Medical administrators are as they should be—well paid paramedical workers. Our administrators don't work for us; they work us—in the old overseer/field-hand sense. Many never enter a classroom. Their pay is two to four times ours. And here's one specific way our administrators hamper us in our work: their writing is generally a bizarre and pompous pidgin of non sequiturs and incomprehensibilities. Students see it and say, "If a person who makes $40,000 a year in education can write like that, why should I listen to a rinky-dink $14,000-a-year assistant professor?"

*John Medelman*
*Menomonie, Wisconsin*

## Open policy

*To the editors:*

Martin Peretz accompanies his inaccurate interpretation of Dr. Brzezinski's and my views on democracy ("Washington Diarist," *TNR*, June 10) with the false statement that we shared "with top Chinese officials national policy statements" in the form of documents "that have not yet been shared with the American people." Let me assure him that no classified policy documents were given to or shown to the Chinese. Dr. Brzezinski and I briefed the Chinese leaders orally and generally on our overall assessment of the global balance and on US national strategy.

Nor is it true that we are "keeping" the American people "in the dark" on these matters. The secretary of defense presented a comprehensive report to the American public on our appraisal of the global balance and on our strategy in a public address last September 15th. The president addressed these issues in his Notre Dame speech of May 22, 1977, his Wake Forest speech of March 17, 1978, and his recent Naval Academy speech. During the past ten months, I have given approximately thirty briefings on PRM-10 and PD-18 to journalists, scholars, public officials, and other citizens from Los Angeles to Boston, as well as to foreigners other than Chinese.

*Samuel P. Huntington*
*Coordinator of*
*Security Planning*
*National Security Council*

*Mr. Peretz replies:* My story was based on press reports confirmed by sources both within and close to the National Security Council. Why would the Chinese have been so gratified—as they were said to have been—to be let in on matters already announced in presidential briefings?

## It makes my skin crawl

*To the editors:*

*TNR* tells us ("Mutiny in California," *TNR*, June 3) that "The elderly are literally driven out of their homes when they must pay tax bills like those in California. . . ." It literally makes my blood boil to think of those deranged public servants cracking whips and chasing those old folks through the streets. Or did they arrive in limousines and drive them to their new locations? Either way, I suppose those old folks are getting their just desserts; after all, they've been literally eating up social security and pension funds, while the rest of us have had to make do on expensive foods.

Do you infer something else by that sentence, or did I imply wrong? Well, I could care less, as long as *TNR* remains a voice of literacy in this crazed world, and is able to resurrect the word *virtually*.

*Edward J. Richter*
*Portland, Oregon*



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# THE NEW REPUBLIC

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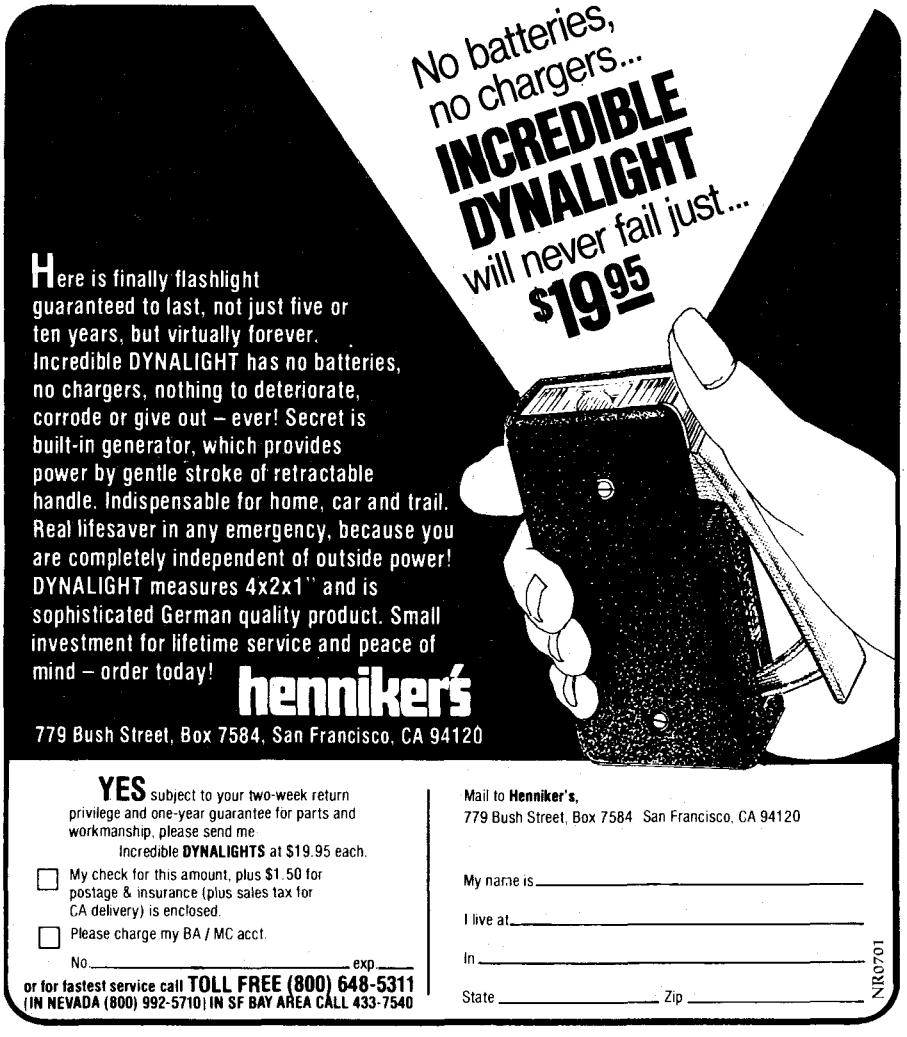
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 1, 1978

# Fish Vindicated

It took the highest court in the land to save the nation's tiniest fish, giving the news media a whale of a story and threatening to leave the Tennessee Valley Authority's $120 million Tellico Dam project high and dry.

The Supreme Court ruled last week that the TVA must halt construction of the dam, which is virtually completed, because it would close off the fast-flowing Little Tennessee River, destroying the only known habitat of the snail darter, a three-inch member of the perch family. The TVA wants to dam the river (and damn the fish) to create a 30-mile reservoir that would stimulate shoreline development and provide water recreation for area residents.

The majority opinion written by Chief Justice Warren Burger does not indicate any great sympathy for the plight of the beleaguered snail darter. The Chief Justice was more concerned about upholding the Constitution's separation of powers provision by refusing to "preempt" the Endangered Species Act passed by Congress in 1973. Congress passed the law reprieving the snail darter, so Congress must take responsibility for ordering its annihilation, Burger argued. Perhaps the justices were moved by the ghastly sight of an embalmed snail darter, brought to court by Attorney General Griffin Bell during oral arguments, and did not want 10,000 to 15,000 similar corpses (the remaining snail darter population) floating on their collective consciences.

The decision is only a temporary victory for environmentalists and others concerned about the fate of numerous embattled species of animals and plants. But Congress already has moved to overturn the snail darter's stay of execution. At least two bills have been introduced in the House to make an exception of the snail darter and continue the dam construction. Such a precedent would seriously undermine the Endangered Species Act. True, the snail darter seems insignificant, but by the same logic, so does the Houston toad, the brown pelican, the bowhead whale and other threatened species.

Senators Howard Baker and John Culver want to amend the Endangered Species Act to create an interagency committee that could waive the protection of the act in cases where "irresolvable conflict" arises between the needs of the species and the needs of the government. Such a vague and loosely-worded mandate would make it easy to circumvent the protection of the act. The very point of the act is that no conflict should occur because man should not build in places where endangered life forms exist. The senators may include strict guidelines in the legislation limiting the instances in which the protection act can be overruled, but such a committee does not bode well for creatures like the snail darter.

A cynical friend has commented that the snail darter litigation is reminiscent of the Scopes trial, with this difference: Tennessee law in that case only forbade the teaching of evolution, whereas the Endangered Species Act is an attempt to outlaw evolution itself. We have some sympathy with this view. Surely there is some amount of expense and inconvenience to human life that is simply too great a price to pay for the protection of a fragile lesser form of life. But as it happens, the Tellico Dam project was a foolish expenditure of money and rearrangement of natural conditions in any case (see "Fish in a Porkbarrel," *TNR*, April 8). We suspect that this is true of many, if not most, of the huge public works projects that fall afoul of the Endangered Species Act. If the actual effect of the act is (as it seems to be) to force congressional review of major public works projects, making sure that the *general* claims of the environment have been given sufficient weight, then we would be reluctant to weaken it.



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The strains of self-government in the nation's capital.

# DC's Post-Colonial Era

Here and there around Washington you can see bumper stickers reading "D.C.: The Last Colony." To elevate the District of Columbia from this ignoble status the US House of Representatives has passed a constitutional amendment that gives the federal city two senators and one, possibly two, representatives in the House. The only hitch to the plan is that if it goes through these new officeholders will have to be elected, which means counting votes, which means doing something the city of Washington is all but unable to do.

After mayoral, city council and school board elections, days go by while sodden-headed civil servants go through the agony of arithmetic. Computers have only made matters worse. The only reason anybody ever gets elected is that so few people vote there aren't many ballots to count. This difficulty is unfortunately typical of the DC government's failure to master the techniques of self-government.

From the 1870s until about 10 years ago, residents of Washington couldn't vote on anything. The federal government's motivation for maintaining this arrangement wasn't racial: during most of that time the city had a heavy white majority. It was after Washington had become predominantly black that Congress gave the city home rule and the right to elect its own magistrates. But freedom, if popular suffrage can be defined as freedom, seldom brings the immediate benefits claimed for it. In Washington no more than in the Belgian Congo did the end of colonialism inaugurate a new and blessed era.

Blacks undoubtedly got more jobs in city government than they would have under white rule, and they were treated with far more politeness than previously. In a few years, it was the whites who began to complain of discrimination and rude treatment. Iris Shapiro, an associate professor in the University of the District of Columbia's Department of Social Welfare Rehabilitation, claimed that she was passed over for promotion on account of the pinky whiteness of her skin. No one inquired as to why an institution of allegedly higher learning would have such an abomination as a Department of Social Welfare Rehabilitation.

In fact, the taxpayer-supported University of the District of Columbia should be renamed Mickey Mouse U. Like so many things run by the District government it is sub par, an altogether fitting copestone to a public school system where it is officially admitted that high school graduates read three years below the national average. The actual skill level of Washington high school seniors is probably even lower.

Washington isn't worse misruled than cities like New York and Cleveland with white mayors. Moreover, some of the city's most egregiously expensive follies must be blamed on white men exclusively. Credit for what is fast becoming a $100 million clunker, the National Visitor Center, goes to the salmon faces. It was Congress and the Department of Interior that discombobulated train passengers at the heavily used Union Station by digging a $46 million hole in the floor of the turn-of-the-century beaux arts edifice to convert it into some sort of ill-defined staging area for the city's millions of tourists, none of whom ever find their way to the inexplicable pit in the middle of the depot.

Nevertheless, the ascension of blacks to government power in Washington has constrained many whites to be very careful in their criticisms. It's not that the white-owned mass media fail to report the ever lengthening chain of budget foul-ups, management disasters, incompetencies and corruptions that characterize municipal government in Washington; it's just that the whites are so charitable and understanding about them. Partly this is the result of (well-founded) white liberal guilt feelings about past and present abuses. (When the Lincoln Memorial was dedicated by President Harding, for example, the audience was segregated and the black dignitaries were insulted by the Marines policing the affair.) Partly it is the result of a patronizing attitude (what more can you expect?). But partly it is because the city services that whites and well-to-do blacks depend on are maintained and, if accreditation to the city's public hospital is withdrawn, as it was, they will go to private hospitals. When such a to-do was being made over Jimmy Carter's sending Amy to public school, much less of a to-do was being made over Walter Mondale sending one of his kids to fashionable St. Alban's and another to equally private Georgetown Day School. Other big-time *liberales* like Teddy Kennedy and Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams also do not avail themselves of the very meager advantages offered by the District's public school system. You can't blame them any more than you can blame Walter Fauntroy, DC's non-voting delegate to the House of Representatives, for spending in the vicinity of three grand a year to send his kid to a private school. He is no different than other highly-placed blacks. The chairman of the city council sends his kid to a private school and James Cheek, the president of Howard University, the nation's most prestigious black college, pays several thousand dollars a year to send his kid, via chauffeured limo, to a mostly white suburban public high school.

White or black, as parents you can hardly blame them for not sending their kids to schools where many of the teachers—the ones who graduated from the DC system themselves—may be functional illiterates. Yet the fact that the wealthiest and most talented people in the city are so self-reliant encourages a condescending tolerance for levels of ineptitude in public administration that rival Botswana and Zaire. This forgiving attitude is encouraged by federal payments of hundreds



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of millions in lieu of real estate taxes, plus enormous federal support for the city in the form of services. Thus, if the regular Washington police prove inadequate, there are innumerable special federal constabularies on patrol in many places throughout the city.

The result is a city government permeated with an outlook that combines a half-life memory of the civil rights movement, a meanly ungenerous egalitarianism and the ignorantly unread hocus-pocus of the viler forms of psychology and business management theory. Amos and Andy have reappeared in Bill Blass suits carrying attaché cases containing flow charts and instructions for conducting T-groups at halfway houses for convicted rapists. A city government captured by the larcenous agents for the human potential movement is much worse than, say, company-sponsored group therapy at AT&T. Such voguish nonsense merely loses money when done at the telephone company, but it's a disaster for poor people when it takes over a city government.

For the needy, be they old, young, or merely middle-aged and crippled, there is next to nothing. No schoolbooks, no rent supplement money, no humane nursing care—only vast paper organizations that spew forth paychecks to employees, contractors and suppliers, but nothing to the needy. A recent example of this organizational Potemkin village: the District government maintains four 24-hour-a-day crisis centers for drug addicts, potential suicides, rape victims and battered children, but the emergency phone numbers it lists in the telephone book for these services are incorrect; and at last report the responsible bureaucrats hadn't even given the right numbers to the information operators. And, so it goes with uncounted numbers of study groups, task forces, surveys, crash programs, pilot programs, innovative efforts, pioneer attempts, ongoing coordinations, audits, assessments, reassessments and reappraisals. There is a consultant, an expert, a highly qualified professional for everything and nothing gets done. (In fairness, a number of these Amoses and Andys are of the Caucasian persuasion, polysyllabic ignorance not being a condition transmitted by chromosomes.)

Presiding over this inert pudding is the Major Major of District of Columbia politics, Mayor Washington of Washington. An easygoing fumble-bumbler, Washington of Washington spent much of his career as a "houser," an occupation which judges success not by the number of houses built but by how well you can chair a subcommittee and how quickly you can incorporate tasteless neologisms into your vocabulary. He was trained to failure in a field that regards achievement as grounds for expulsion. *The Washington Post* prevailed upon Lyndon Johnson to appoint this amiably benign incompetent to the city's top job and when the position was made elective, he got to keep it.

Under Washington the city has been attempting to practice a form of real estate socialism. A punishing rent control law has taken the fun and profit out of the apartment house business. In addition it is now almost impossible to evict a tenant in less than six months. This, like all the other marplot schemes executed by the District government's palsied hands, is advertised as a measure to help the poor and the laboring middle classes.

The consequence of these socially enlightened policies seem to be that ever more low-income blacks are driven out of the central city toward the new slums of suburban Maryland. Landlords, unable to get so much as their costs back, let buildings go to wrack and ruin, whereupon they are pulled down and replaced with new, expensive condominiums; or, the wrack and ruin step in the process being omitted, they are immediately condoized with the old tenants removed by fair means and foul. The government retaliates with laws making condo conversions more difficult, and with other laws against speculation—i.e., selling for a profit—but all these efforts result in a lunatic set of economically preposterous contradictions since it is impossible to have socialism with one industry in one city in an otherwise highly capitalistic society. A better idea would be rent subsidies to help lower-income people. Indeed the District has enacted such a law. In characteristic style, it did so without the money to pay for the subsidies, but no matter—a rent subsidy program is administratively far too onerous for such a ten-thumbed government to carry out.

At one time, it was supposed that the inertia of the District government's bureaucracy was attributable to an excess of caution. Nobody wanted to make a decision for fear of getting his or her fanny caught. But of late tales and allegations of corruption have begun to circulate, suggesting an energy level higher than previously supposed. The scandals don't yet pop up with a frequency rivaling that of Chicago or Philadelphia, but recently one of the mayor's closest collaborators was indicted for conspiring to do naughtinesses with a real estate tycoon.

Thus far Washington municipal corruption seems to be unorganized. The proceeds from it don't, as in so many other places, help to defray the costs of a ruling political organization. They seem to go only to freelancing individual officeholders who are bribed by impatient businessmen desperate to expedite action by municipal organizations bent into paralysis by indolence, lethargy and the opiates of perfect job security and high salaries.

Doleful inner-city ditties like this one traditionally end with a prediction that the town has had it and the future is glum. Not so for Washington. The place is booming. There couldn't be more office construction if they'd discovered oil under the White House lawn. With its good looks, its shops, its numberless entertainments and diversions, the well-to-do want to live here in swelling numbers. They're smart to want to.



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Every year brings a new museum or a new something that makes the city yet more desirable. The town still doesn't have a baseball team, but it has a new subway which is luxuriously quiet and remarkably free of muggers and cut-purses. If the Washington Metro's costs come close to those of the Trident submarine program, those nice Iowa people whose taxes paid for it will enjoy the ride the next time they come atouristing. All of which proves again that *pecunia omnia vincit*. If you have money, you don't need a decent government.

**Nicholas von Hoffman**

*Nicholas von Hoffman* is a syndicated columnist.

On the Hill

# The McGovern-Dole Cancer Cure

In a bold moment in 1971, Congress declared war on cancer and pledged to buy a cure for the disease as a 200th birthday present for the republic. It was a kind gesture but, alas, not the sort of gift Congress is empowered to give. Since that moment seven years have passed, seven billion dollars have been spent on research, the bicentennial has come and gone, but the warriors against cancer are no closer to victory than when they began. Some people are calling it the Vietnam of biomedical research. The analogy is apt in one respect. The generals who volunteered to command the troops are finding that their job is increasingly a political one. Every year they grow a little more desperate to show that progress is being made and a little more compromised by the demands of the big institution they head.

On June 13 senators Robert Dole, Republican of Kansas, and George McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota—both of whom come from wheat states and sit on the Senate's nutrition subcommittee—called a couple of cancer war generals on the carpet. They wanted to know why the war hadn't been won. How come the research troops burned up seven billion dollars in seven years but found no solution? Both senators are experts on nutrition. They wanted to know why the National Cancer Institute has spent so little money looking into the dietary causes of cancer. Senator Dole put it bluntly in his opening statement: "Cancer research to date has been largely cost inefficient. We have spent billions of tax dollars on cancer research and still haven't realized the magic cure." One envisions a group of cancer researchers loafing around the water cooler while the magic cure sits out in the lobby waiting to be realized. Then Dole challenged the National Cancer Institute with his main point. He wanted to know "why nutrition cancer research initiatives remain such a minute part of the research budget even though one-half of all cancers are diet-related." Senator McGovern hit the same theme, but harder: "Since the passage of the 1971 Cancer Act, we have determined that 80 to 90 percent of cancers are apparently environmentally caused. More striking is the discovery that 40 percent of the cancers in men and 60 percent in women are nutrition-related. . . . Yet knowing that the majority of cancers are preventable, and that many are diet-related, the National Cancer Institute . . . continues to emphasize treatment and the search for cancer cures." It amounts, he said, to a "total failure to address the diet/cancer relationship."

The generals remained calm under fire. Dr. Donald Frederickson, director of the National Institutes of Health, and Dr. Arthur Upton, director of NCI, spoke of the honor they felt at being called to testify and promised that they would pay more attention to nutrition in the future. The Cancer Institute has created a special ad hoc working group to coordinate nutrition and cancer research projects, Upton said. And Frederickson said he had asked each institute to find out how much money it spent on nutrition research last year. He came up with a total for NIH of $93 million in fiscal 1977. Frederickson then ran through a long list of bureaucratic changes that have been made at NIH in the last year to accommodate Congress's latest obsession. He concluded, "Nutrition clearly is a high priority area mission at NIH." The senators seemed pleased to have put the generals back on the right track and set the war in motion again.

Despite the fuss, the new campaign against dietary causes of cancer cannot promise to deliver much more than the old war on cancer. Its main effect will be to deliver more money to a school of researchers who have not been invited aboard the NCI gravy train before. Nutrition researchers last year received about four million dollars from a total Cancer Institute budget of about $800 million. Now, if Congress has its way, they will receive between $20 and $30 million. They may do some very useful work under the new regime, but they cannot say, any more than other researchers have been able to, that they have found the gateway that will lead to the discovery of cancer's cure. All they can say is that their path has not been as thoroughly explored as the others. That was enough of a justification, it seems, to spur senators McGovern and Dole into action. It is the same vague promise that launched the original war on cancer seven years ago.

The senators would not have revved up the cancer war again had they not had some encouragement. It came in several forms. First was the element of despair. The researchers themselves recognize that the kind of work funded under the war on cancer since 1971 has not come close to solving the puzzle. It has turned up some fascinating information about the way that genes


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and viruses and tumors work, but it hasn't produced the kind of breakthrough that would be useful for widespread application. Much of the work done for the Cancer Institute was directed at finding a virus vaccine. No such discovery has come along, and the viral oncologists find it more and more difficult to live with the promises made in their behalf. But while the students of viruses and tumors are muting the war rhetoric, other students have become quite ready to exploit it.

Chief among these new crusaders are the nutritionists and epidemiologists, people who try to find correlations between the substances we consume and the incidence of cancer. One of the attractions of their approach is that it provides useful information for the non-expert from the outset—lists of things we ought to stay away from if we want to avoid cancer. These researchers also offer to give useful information about the kinds of foods that are beneficial for patients who are undergoing treatment for cancer.

In the recent Senate hearings, this cause was advanced by one George Blackburn, MD, an associate professor of surgery at the Harvard Medical School and director of the nutrition support service at Boston's Deaconess Hospital. He said that the medical establishment is biased against nutritionists and that, as a result, NIH and the Cancer Institute have failed to give them adequate research funds. He asked the senators to create a line item in the new budget "devoted solely to the problem of diet nutrition and cancer," and he urged that they create clinical research centers in his special field at NIH and in 12 locations around the country. The senators seemed amenable.

The critical third element in the new crusade comes from the patients. An official at NCI mentioned that an organization known as the Candlelighters was responsible for having Congress write a clause into the 1974 appropriation bill creating the original diet, nutrition and cancer program at the NCI. It is this program that Dr. Blackburn wishes to expand. The Candlelighters are friends and relatives of children with cancer. Grace Monaco, president of the Candlelighters Foundation, said, "Yes, we had everything to do with" the creation of the cancer nutrition program. She explained that parents found that children in cancer therapy fared better on some diets than they did on others. But when the parents sought advice from the Cancer Institute, they discovered that there was no central office to coordinate and translate for consumers the sparse data that researchers had produced. Nor could parents get NCI to help sort out the nutty diet and cancer theories from the sound ones. This made them angry. The Candlelighters lobbied hard to change the NCI's attitude, and succeeded.

The cancer establishment now seems ready to move over and make room for some nutritionists and other students of the environmental causes of cancer. One sign that a shift is anticipated among the experts appeared this year on Long Island. Dr. James Watson, the well-known genetic researcher, runs an institution called the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, a fundamental biological research center. Much of its work has been funded by the Cancer Institute. Last year the lab was given a neighboring estate to convert to the tax-free purposes of scientific research. Watson thought long and hard about the possible use the place might be put to, and in the end he decided to call it "Banbury Center" and make it a meeting place for conferences on the environmental causes of cancer. It will definitely be entering a growing market.

Victor McElhaney, the newly appointed director of the Banbury Center, is pleased to be a fresh draftee in the cancer war. He said there is a "widespread conviction among researchers that environmental clues are among the most important" for discovering the causes of cancer. He also said that McGovern and Dole were probably echoing the views of the "technical community" the other day in hearings when they told the Cancer Institute it would have to pay more attention to nutrition research. "It is useful to appear to be responding to instructions," McElhaney said, suggesting that the scientists had written the script they wanted the senators to read. "American society is dedicated to saying 'yes,'" he pointed out. Since Congress speaks for America, it is inclined to say "yes." And it is never more willing to say yes than when it is asked to pay for a war on cancer.

**Eliot Marshall**

The making of a Nazi.

# Frank Collin's Roots

The young Joseph Goebbels of the National Socialist White People's Party, which has its headquarters in a swastika-draped townhouse on Wilson Boulevard in Arlington, Virginia, is a polite young party loyalist named Martin Kerr. Mr. Kerr shakes a visiting reporter's hand like any other flack, and produces what he calls the "press kit" on the Chicago Nazi leader, Frank Collin. Collin, says Kerr, is half Jewish, the son of a refugee from the Nazis named Max Simon Cohn who arrived in the United States on the *S.S. Veendam* on March 9, 1939.

The "press kit" contains four items. First is a leaflet done in wanted poster style which offers a $10,000 reward "in cash to any person or organization who can prove conclusively that the individual pictured above has no Jewish ancestry. For eight years this phony has been attempting to fool decent white people into believing that he is not of Jewish descent. The time has



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come for Frank Collin/Cohn to PUT UP OR SHUT UP!" The leaflet is signed with a swastika and contains in small italic type at the bottom the notation, "Authorized by Harold Mantius, Business Manager."

The second document is a copy of the National Socialist Bulletin, the "official internal organ" of the party, which devotes its cover to a stormtrooper convention held in the Midwest in April. There is a picture of the stormtroopers marching in motorcycle helmets and "White Power" windbreakers. The Collin/Cohn story appears on the back page under the headline, "No Comment Dept." The story is a reproduction of a column in the May 14 edition of *The Chicago Sun-Times* reporting that following disclosure of Collin's Jewish roots on Channel 5 in that city, Collin was confronted by members of his party shouting: "You're nothing but a f———— Jew and we ought to kill you."

Finally, the Nazi press kit contains what Kerr describes as the "documentary proof": a petition of naturalization and a declaration of intent to be naturalized obtained from US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. On the petition, Max Simon Cohn describes his son as Frank Collin (m) born in Chicago, November 3, 1944, and his own religious upbringing as Hebrew. This evidence, says the Nazi spokesman, proves conclusively that Collin has Jewish blood.

Collin, by traditional doctrine, is not a Jew. Under the law of return, he would need a Jewish mother to claim citizenship in the state of Israel. And he has a legal right to hate Jews. The United States Supreme Court said so this month in a decision holding unconstitutional the various devices thought up by the municipality of Skokie, Illinois, to prevent Collin's announced anti-Jewish demonstration there.

Collin is a somewhat incoherent individual who wears dirty shirts and trousers with a split seam. At his most articulate he has compared Jews to insects. His fanatical anti-Semitism isn't even in the mainstream of Chicago-area Nazi thought. According to the *Sun-Times*, many Illinois Nazis can't understand Collin's obsession with demonstrating in Skokie when the real target of the party "is these niggers—they are the ones we should be shooting." In recent weeks, many Collin supporters have drifted away and one reason why Collin hasn't gone and marched in Skokie is that the threat is so obviously more potent than actually demonstrating.

An Illinois psychiatrist who conducted an interview with Collin on Chicago television found him to be consumed with hatred for his father and probably schizophrenic. By announcing an anti-Jew demonstration in Skokie, this man proposed, Collin is in fact announcing an anti-Collin demonstration. Whether or not you accept this kind of televised psychoanalysis, it seems clear that the American Civil Liberties Union and the media have been dragged into a fundamental complicity with a man rather unquestionably suffering from some kind of mental illness. The aggressive self-hatred being demonstrated in Chicago by Frank Collin is not without precedent. One case that comes to mind is that of Daniel Burros, the Jewish Klansman exposed in 1965 by McCandlish Phillips in *The New York Times*. Following publication of the story, Burros committed suicide. In a more direct fashion, destruction may be what Collin seeks for himself. Whether it will be provided by Jewish militants, rival Nazis or some other variety of crackpot, Collin will have had a hand in it.

The Arlington Nazis are touting their copies of Max Cohn's immigration papers in the interests of purifying their Aryan movement. There is a point for the rest of us, too. It is that while whizzing along with Collin's fantasies, almost everyone involved has helped him succeed most wildly beyond his own dreams. The next Frank Collin, whoever she or he may be, should not be extended the same cooperation.

**Jonathan Miller**

*Jonathan Miller* works for David Frost.

As peace talk peters out,
war talk is starting up.

# Not Ready for Peace

*Jerusalem*

Almost everyone who counts in the Middle East wants peace, but no one wants it enough. The Israelis don't want it enough to say they'll give up the West Bank for it. The Arabs don't want it enough to talk about taking anything less. And so, in spite of the thrill of hope offered to the world by Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and in spite of a tantalizing narrowing of views on previously intractable questions, the prospect for actually achieving peace in the Middle East is not good, and despairing people here are starting to talk about war. There is little chance of a major military outbreak any time soon because the Arabs lack the means to attack and Israel lacks a reason. But war talk is starting, and this means that people are shifting their energies and imagination away from peace strategies and toward military strategies, and that could be the starting point of the road to disaster.

Carter administration officials claim to see glimmers of light amidst the gloom. Despite the Israeli government's latest refusal to say that it will ever countenance Arab sovereignty over the West Bank, or even to discuss the subject, Sadat has not given in to



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Arab pressures to call off his peace initiative. The administration is encouraged to note that Sadat's reaction to the Israeli decision was rather mild ("vague," Sadat called the Israeli announcement, "not positive"), and hopes that if Israel is not willing to make any new moves toward a settlement, Sadat is.

While world attention has been focused on Israel's debate about what might happen to the West Bank following Israel's proposed five-year period of limited Arab "self-rule," the Carter administration has been working on Sadat to come up with a counter-proposal. A high-ranking official said, "We think, on the Egyptian side, that they will have something to put forward in the very near future" concerning how the West Bank and Gaza Strip might be administered during the five-year period. The administration expects the counter-proposal to lead to resumed political negotiations between Israel and Egypt. The administration seems to hope that yet another public act of flexibility on Sadat's part—as contrasted with Israel's refusal to budge—will create pressures in and on Israel for a change in its position.

But even administration optimists admit that the key question is not whether negotiations resume, but whether terms of a settlement can be agreed upon. There is now substantial agreement about the Sinai. The government of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin—breaking with past Israeli policy—has offered to return sovereignty over Sinai land it captured in the 1967 war in exchange for a peace agreement. Egyptian and Israeli military officials are still wrangling over security conditions for such a transfer, but the issues of Israeli settlements and air bases are thought to be soluble, if they are not yet solved.

But no such political agreement has been reached over the West Bank and Gaza, where the Begin government (again breaking with past Israeli policy) refuses to offer to withdraw from captured territory in return for peace. Its proposal, instead, is for a five-year period of Israeli military presence, continued Jewish settlement and Arab "administrative autonomy," after which negotiations might take place between Arab residents, Israel and Jordan as to future governing arrangements, but with Arab sovereignty (either Jordanian or independent Palestinian) excluded as a possibility. The Arabs consider this a formula for perpetual Israeli domination of the area, and they refuse to discuss it. Jordan refuses to join in peace negotiations because of the Israeli proposal, and Sadat stopped talking to Israel in January because of it. Sadat apparently hoped that United States pressure would force Israel to relent, but it hasn't.

Nor is it likely to. The Begin government is totally committed to retention of the West Bank—ideologically, strategically, politically, tactically and psychologically. Begin and many in his Likud Party consider the West Bank to be Israeli territory by the gift of God, and the government refers to it officially by its Biblical names, Judea and Samaria. As military hawks, Begin and his supporters consider the West Bank indispensable to Israel's military security.

Even if Begin could bring himself to consider relinquishing the territory, or part of it, super-right elements of his ruling coalition could sabotage any attempt to carry out such an intention. This Israeli rejection front includes the Gush Emunim, religious fanatics who are willing to practice civil disobedience to assert their right to settle in the West Bank, and Begin's agriculture minister, former general Ariel Sharon, who sent bulldozers out to churn up Israeli-held areas of the Sinai this January, apparently to convince Sadat that Israel didn't really mean to diminish its presence at all. If it were up to Sharon, Israel probably would find a way to sweep the West Bank of its one million Arab residents and keep the land forever. By comparison, Begin is a moderate. The government's self-rule proposal seems to contemplate a governing arrangement, unique in the world, whereby Arabs and Jews would jointly occupy the land, though Israel would control it militarily. Presumably, Israel would try to buy Arabs out, or hope that the smartest of them would leave, but the process would be gradual.

Begin is described by domestic critics and even by some friends as being old beyond his 64 years, "very sick" with heart trouble, seared psychologically by the Jewish Holocaust, set in his ways, incapable of changing his most strongly-held beliefs and too weak to withstand determined political opposition from old and close political friends.

The Begin government's basic negotiating strategy has been to achieve a separate peace with Egypt, the biggest and militarily strongest of the Arab countries, and thereby eliminate any possibility of Arab war-making against Israel. But Sadat has been unwilling to reach a separate deal, or at least a nakedly separate deal. Formally, Sadat is demanding that Israel agree to withdraw to its pre-1967 boundaries, including all of the West Bank, and to permit Palestinian "self-determination," which Israel interprets to mean an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank governed by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

American officials—and some Israelis, too—believe Sadat's real positions are considerably softer. They believe he really wants little more than a fig leaf to cover a separate settlement. They say he does not favor a separate Palestinian state, but a West Bank entity linked to Jordan; he does not require that the PLO have a role in peacemaking or in governing after a peace is made; he understands that Israeli "security problems" require "some adjustment" of West Bank boundaries; and he does not demand that Israel make a West Bank offer that King Hussein of Jordan *accepts* before initialing and beginning to implement an Israeli-Egyptian peace, but only an offer that Hussein *ought to* accept. One American official said: "Sadat is edging


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toward saying to Israel: 'yes, you just say you'll withdraw from the West Bank and then add 15 conditions, if you like—timing, security, methods and so forth—and we'll haggle about it. But you've got to say you'll withdraw.'"

But Israel right now will not say that it will withdraw from the West Bank—ever, or under any circumstances. Many Americans and Arabs seem to think that the Begin government can be made amenable to political influence from abroad or within Israel; or that Begin might be toppled, perhaps by Defense Minister Ezer Weizman; or that peace could be achieved if Begin would only die. One high-ranking Egyptian official told me in Cairo that Begin is "a crazy nut . . . self-righteous, inflexible, a fanatic, an absolutist, a dogmatic extremist" who somehow has been able to "intimidate the whole Israeli establishment," but who, nonetheless, can be made to "see the light" by Egyptian appeals to the Israeli public, to the Jews of the diaspora, to the American government and public and to world opinion. Both Arabs and Americans have invested strong hopes in the Israeli "Peace Now" movement as a signal that Israeli opinion is changing in an important way.

But not one of these fond wishes seems justified by real conditions in Israel. Begin's West Bank proposal carried the Knesset by a vote of 59 to 37, a healthy margin. Polls indicate that if an election were held now, Begin's party's strength would increase, largely at the expense of the divided and disappointing semi-dovish Democratic Movement for Change headed by archaeologist Yigael Yadin.

Defense Minister Weizman is far more popular in America and Egypt than Begin is. He is willing to offer Sadat a bigger fig leaf with which to cover a separate peace. Weizman's position in the recent West Bank debate was that Israel should agree to negotiate the "final status" of the region after a five-year waiting period, instead of leaving the question open, as Begin's plan did. But Weizman was outmaneuvered by Begin and soundly trounced in the cabinet and the Knesset. At least twice before Weizman tried to rebel against Begin and was beaten, and this time Weizman apparently has been badly weakened politically.

No one can tell who would replace Begin if he were forced from office by illness. But the policies of the Likud are unlikely to get any softer, and might emerge even tougher from a chaotic power fight.

The Labor opposition does have a softer negotiating position on the West Bank than the Begin government's. It favors "territorial compromise," meaning partial withdrawal, in return for peace. Labor favors Israel's keeping territories needed to protect Israel's security but giving up those populated by Arabs. Conceivably, Labor's position could attract Jordan's King Hussein into negotiations and free Sadat to move toward a settlement. In secret, high-level talks said to be going on between Jordanian and Israeli officials, Jordan reportedly has shown no inclination to modify its public demand for a commitment to total Israeli withdrawal as its price for entering negotiations. Some Americans think Jordan knows Begin will not offer withdrawal of any kind, and so is sticking to a maximalist position, but that he would start talking if Labor came along offering part of the West Bank.

But there are several things wrong with this theory. One is that when Israel previously offered partial withdrawal, in the form of the famous Allon plan, it was rejected by Hussein. Another is that there is little likelihood of Labor's coming to power anytime soon, since the Likud was elected for a four-year term that has three years more to run. And even were Labor to come to power sometime, it would still be subject to strong rightist pressures to safeguard Israeli security and to permit Jews to settle in "Judea and Samaria." In fact, of the 96 settlements that Israel has placed in captured Arab territories since the 1967 war, which are interpreted by the Arabs as evidence of Israel's intent to remain, 75 were established during the reign of the Israel Labor Party. Labor may want to give up some of the West Bank for peace, but it might be unable politically to offer enough to satisfy the Arabs.

The fact is that the Begin government was elected by a plurality of the Israeli people, and its policies apparently continue to represent the attitudes of a plurality, if not a majority. A small part of the Israeli consensus wants to keep the West Bank for religious reasons, and another part wants to keep it because it wants the land for settlement and development. But the biggest part still is afraid that the territory, if it ever came under Arab control again, would be used as a base for attacks on Israel. King Hussein and Anwar Sadat may say it isn't so, but enough Israelis don't trust them—or don't trust that these gentlemen can make peace and stay alive—to make it politically impossible for any present Israeli government to do what the Arabs demand in return for peace.

Prospects for peace may get worse as time goes on. Arabs and Arabists once expected that Israel's growing population of Oriental Jews, as products of the Middle East, would be more ready to make peace with the Arabs as they gained political power than the Ashkenazi Jews of European origin have been. But now that the Orientals are becoming a majority among Israeli voters, it appears that to know the Arabs best is to distrust them most. The Orientals are the bedrock of Likud support, and some Ashkenazi intellectuals fear that hawkish politicians will play upon Oriental distrust of the Arabs to ensure that no Israeli government is able to achieve peace.

As against actual Israeli political facts, the much-publicized "Peace Now" movement seems extravagantly overrated. Starting with a protest letter to Begin signed by 350 army reservists, the movement swelled quickly to attract more than 30,000 people at a Tel Aviv rally in March. It still can get 100,000 people to sign a



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petition, but it lacks either a political program or a way to exert political power, and most Israeli politicians dismiss it as nothing more than an outpouring of peace sentiments that all Israelis share, regardless of ideology. If the Arabs expect it to do in Israel what the Vietnam peace movement did in the United States—turn the country around and force it to pull out—they appear to be mistaken. Getting out of Vietnam was easy by comparison to withdrawing from the West Bank, because Israel believes—rightly or wrongly—that its very survival will be threatened if it does.

And so, if the Arabs persist in demanding Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank as the price of peace, there is likely to be no peace. Because of pressures in the Arab world, it seems unlikely that Sadat or any other Arab can agree to give Israel peace without exacting a promise of withdrawal, at least sometime. It seems that the Middle East is not ready for peace. The United States could intervene, perhaps proposing an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank over an extended period, say 15 years. But there is no indication that either side would accept such an idea. A US effort to impose a peace on the Middle East would be met with furious resistance from Israel, and there is no indication that President Carter is politically strong enough to make it stick.

In the Middle East, people are beginning to show signs of despair. Their patience with each other is beginning to wear thin. They are talking, still vaguely, about deadlines for action. Sadat is being urged by Syria to renounce his peace initiative, and by Jordan and Saudi Arabia to at least attend an Arab summit, where Sadat and other Arabs can be reconciled. In Israel, some officials have the sense that Sadat's initiative must reach some conclusion within a few months. In Egypt, Sadat has indicated he may do something decisive in July or in October or by the end of the year.

And people are beginning to talk about war. King Hussein, perennially a pessimist, reportedly has been worrying about it. Ezer Weizman, after losing the West Bank debate, supposedly told Defense Ministry officials to start reviewing war plans. He probably spoke in pique, but all over the Middle East college professors and tour guides and people in the street understand that if there is no peace, inevitably there will be war.

Sadat has told his army that if Israel will not relent, he retains the option of going to war. He indicated, realistically, that war couldn't come for five years. Israel currently enjoys overwhelming military superiority, but the Arabs have begun planning to build their own weapons industry, financed by Saudi Arabia and aided technologically by France.

Sadat's war talk has led some Israelis to begin thinking and saying, "See, Sadat doesn't want peace after all," and that is the way it usually goes in the Middle East maelstrom. Each side wants peace, but believes the other doesn't. The result of that thinking has been four wars, and the end is not in sight.

**Morton Kondracke**

The higher learning in America since the events of 1968.

# Ten Years On

## by David Riesman

As societies have become increasingly secular and democratic, we no longer group historical events in terms of the dynasties or monarchies that presided when they took place. Instead, we are apt to think in terms of centuries or decades—even though when we say "the 19th century" we speak of an era that began in 1815 and ended in 1914. In the United States, it is common to speak of the 1960s as a "decade of protest," sometimes looked back on with nostalgia, though the reference is similarly approximate.

The first anti-university protest—the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in the fall of 1964—grew out of civil rights activism in the San Francisco Bay area, led primarily by students who had been active earlier in the Deep South. When the Berkeley administration resisted the use of university facilities as a base for mobilizing civil rights demonstrations, activists turned

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their energies against the university itself. The Free Speech Movement's shrewd leaders discovered that by manipulating the university into behaving badly—which in fact it did—they could draw on sources of student discontent, including a discontent with curriculum, that they themselves did not feel especially strongly.

Civil rights were involved again four years later at Columbia. As at Berkeley, the protest leaders were primarily white, from educated and professional families, many of them Jewish. A few came from patrician families eager to show that they were not "bourgeois." The parents of the protesters were generally liberal or even radical. Several studies have shown that many campus activists were acting on behalf of parental ideals and with parental sympathy. Similarly, some children of working-class parents from the labor-union rather than "new politics" wing of the Democratic Party turned to George Wallace as expressing their blend of populism and cultural conservatism, and their hatred for the protesters who rejected the privileges of elite education which the working-class people only wished they could gain.

So, contrary to widespread belief at the time, there was a social-class gap but not a serious generation gap. The major exception was among blacks. Activist black students truly rejected the conservatism and caution of their church-going parents and turned to a secularized, increasingly nationalist mode of behavior. In such families, the wearing of an "Afro" and a dashiki often caused bitter parental opposition, as did the use of expletive-filled "black English," often copied by liberal and radical whites. (Today, this true "generation gap" is somewhat healed, as the Afros have become less exuberant and the parents themselves more urbanized and less cautious.)

The Vietnam war did not become an issue on most campuses until 1968, although the first teach-in occurred at the University of Michigan in 1965. Like the civil rights activists, opponents of the war found that they could mobilize more support if they directed their protests at least partly against the university for its alleged involvement in the war. The university was also an easier and more vulnerable target than troop trains or Congress. The university thus became a surrogate for a society increasingly seen by activist students and faculty as racist, imperialist, and monolithically impermeable.

In the major universities, protests came to a crescendo in May 1970. But like other political and cultural fashions, uncivil disobedience was downwardly mobile socially. In the early 1970s protests, strikes, boycotts, building occupations, and arson (although only rarely, bombings) continued in less prestigious institutions and among students of less predictable socio-economic backgrounds. Even today, protests continue (though rarely violent) in these institutions over what might be called consumer issues: rising (if still relatively low) tuition; complaints (which would look absurd to visitors from most other countries) against dormitory accommodations or food; perennial arguments over inadequate parking facilities and efforts to limit the use of student cars; and in a few cases, rather creditably, complaints over the curtailment of library hours.

In the selective institutions, a new wave of protests is beginning over issues such as investments in South Africa or the failure to recruit the appropriate proportion of non-white students or—perhaps less often than a few years ago—campus speakers regarded as racist, sexist, or complicitous with other forms of evil. In these same selective institutions, there are also more protests in defense of striking staff—while at the same time students protest the rising tuition needed in private institutions to pay for rising costs. On non-elite campuses, in contrast, students are rarely sympathetic with striking staff.

During most of the periods of student protest, faculty almost always was also involved. Teachers taught students the terminology of protest, acted as off-stage counselors and sometimes as incendiary leaders. This activity attracted not only younger faculty, who were sometimes former activists themselves, but also some older professors made vulnerable to conversion by America's continuing love affair with youth. Sad was the fate of many of these would-be avatars of protest, pushed aside as the student movements grew more fragmented, violent, and divided along racial lines. Several college presidents also positioned themselves on the side of the activist students. They did so partly to avoid confrontation and possible destruction of buildings and even lives, but also as a way of using students as a battering-ram against entrenched scholarly faculty. In instituting new "relevant" programs such as black studies against the resistance of such faculty, the administrators played the populist kings uniting with the commons against the faculty aristocracy, though in our own case it was often a meritocratic, even Jeffersonian, aristocracy of talents.

Many of America's 3000 institutions of higher learning (not to mention the thousands of profit-making career-training institutions not included in this number) never experienced the slightest tremor of protest over the past decade. Protests were rare, for example, in the two-year community colleges which comprise the fastest growing segment of American higher education.

Another large group of private colleges and universities—those run by evangelical sects—not only did not experience protests, but actually became stronger, as did the evangelical churches generally, in part as a backlash against the protests, against modernism, against cosmopolitanism. The United States remains one of the most religious of all



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industrialized countries. The evangelical colleges act as half-way houses between traditional small-town and rural America and the contemporary industrial and technological worlds. They often provide excellent education in a severely religious and paternalistic setting. Even though the share of private education continues to decline in the United States in comparison with the subsidized public sector, these denominational colleges are surviving—at their best, islands of cohesion and serenity (and at their worst, of claustrophobia) in a clamorous world.

Coeducation spread with almost panic speed in the latter part of the 1960s. Of course coeducation always had prevailed at the great state universities and most of the once-Protestant private colleges outside the Northeast and the South. But a certain useful hypocrisy also had existed which permitted clandestine intimacies between the sexes without legitimizing such relations as the only "natural" form of collegiate life. Another change in the 1960s was the abolition of parietal restraints and the abdication by adults of a task they dislike anyway: the supervision of student residential life.

For a while, a highly visible minority of students believed that there would be plenty of jobs, and that they could spend their undergraduate years participating in what might be thought of as a co-curriculum of political activism or in the counter-culture (often non-political and self-indulgent). Students at all social levels began to manifest a concern for expressivity. At its best, the expressivity was disciplined. But often, the vogue of expressivity encouraged the belief that creativity was self-sustaining and only harmed by critical judgment. The counter-culture's more general impact was to encourage students and their faculty mentors to hang loose, play it cool, try various sexual and psychedelic experiments, and sometimes to "stop-out"—the term for dropping out of university temporarily. Some of the latter entered communes in attempts to avoid the traditional drive for upward mobility that previously had motivated attendance at universities. Now many of the stop-outs and communards have returned to finish their degrees and to pursue further professional degrees. After five or six years away from college, many have decided that they do not want to be part of the working class and subordinate to bosses with less cultivation than themselves. Few have been able to make a living as craftsmen or artisans. Studies of communes—both politically oriented and those merely continuing the American pastoral war with modernity—suggest that few are oases of compassion, let alone joyfulness.

These voluntary exiles from elite colleges have returned to enroll primarily in the state and community colleges. In the most selective colleges, the students are still almost all 18 to 24. Most of these young students are desperately eager to establish a record that will secure them places in law, medical, and other professional schools. These graduate schools have expanded, but the more distinguished ones have not matched the doubling of undergraduate population that occurred in the 1960s. For example the number of top-flight national law schools has remained small, leaving expansion to the legal mills that turn out solo lawyers who, when not chasing ambulances, may not be chasing polluters, professors, medical practitioners and other assorted game—like all hunting, an uncertain livelihood. These pressures have led to a renewed emphasis on grades, previously considered an example of technocratic inhumanity and elitist classification.

One consequence of the understandable hunger for a secure place in an uncertain world has been a disastrous brain-drain of talented young people into the law, and a growing brain-drain also into medicine (which does not need so large a number who are in many instances over-trained for the day-to-day work of general practitioner, or are not properly trained for the quite different work of public health or preventive medicine). And though students in the most selective institutions until recently despised large corporate business and looked on large governmental institutions as impenetrable if not corrupt, they are now beginning to attend graduate schools of management to learn how to become the well-paid servants of the large business and large non-profit enterprise.

One aspect of the anti-university protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s was an attack by articulate students against competitiveness and the constraints of meritocracy. Many faculty members were happy to abandon any effort to maintain academic excellence or a coherent curriculum, since this freed them to do *their* own thing, whether research or fishing. Now many teachers have concluded that too many concessions were made to student hedonism and insouciance, with the result that students can graduate with a shopping bag of elective courses but unable to write a coherent paragraph, study a difficult text or understand anything about mathematics, natural science or the technological man-made world. They have not learned a foreign language, nor escaped the provincialism of their time and place. In the minority of selective institutions, an effort is being made to reimpose some requirements. The protests have not been vehement; it has been more difficult to get faculty agreement as to whether one thing is more worth knowing than another than to get student acceptance of new requirements (which in any case will only affect their successors).

As close to one-half of the greatly enlarged cohort of high school graduates sought in the 1960s to attend college, many of the less ambitious, adept or affluent went to an enlarging network of four-year state colleges and to the public two-year community colleges. Contrary to prevailing belief these primarily commuter



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institutions do not draw exclusively on a working-class clientele, but also attract students from middle-income families. The earlier period of protest affected many of these institutions obliquely as part of the general loss of belief in standards of excellence. The most publicized aspect of this shift has been "open admissions," but something close to open admissions has always characterized all but a handful of American colleges and universities. The really important change has been what might be called "open commencement." In an earlier era state universities admitted almost everyone but failed a large fraction in their first year. Today it is no longer acceptable to fail students because they speak slovenly English, are unable to write coherently, cannot do *explication de texte* or cannot read anything more difficult than the sports page. Almost any requirements have come to be regarded as elitist, which in translation often has meant racist or gerontocratic or otherwise illegitimate.

Ten years ago, it was rare to find a white male attending college with College Board combined verbal and mathematical scores under 800. Today white males are attending college with combined scores of 600. Often these are people who hated school, were truants and periodic drop-outs, in an earlier day considered neither by themselves nor anyone else as "college material." But in recent years colleges and universities, the private ones dependent on income from tuition and the public ones on state largesse tied to "body count," have marketed themselves with fierce intensity, making it appear as if not to attend college was to miss out on everyone's American entitlement. Financial inducement was offered by legislation providing grants, loans and work-study programs for students who either declared themselves independent from home or came from low-income families.

For some of these students, attendance at university is perfunctory and amounts to a combination welfare and unemployment insurance program. But many others sacrifice high-wage jobs in unionized industries, take low-paying part-time and vacation jobs and work desperately hard to earn, learn and repay.

In these same institutions, moreover, there is still another clientele that is serious, even solemn. These are older people—especially older women—who, with children now of school age or capable of being placed in child-care centers, are returning to college to acquire training to enter the labor force at a higher level. The vocational pressures discussed above are partly the result of the extraordinary increase in the number of working mothers, or working wives who are not mothers. In the past decade the proportion of women in college has gone from 35 percent to almost 50 percent.

The fact that students now are taking their studies more seriously than in recent years, largely for vocational reasons, has led many to suppose that their attitudes have grown more conservative. Undoubtedly, in a number of the less elite institutions, those who in the past quietly harbored conservative attitudes but feared to express them are now less likely to feel intimidated, although the fear of being charged with racism or sexism—a charge by its nature impossible to rebut—still silences many. But both large-scale surveys and limited more intensive studies indicate that attitudes have not grown more conservative. Today's students frequently express disenchanted and even nihilistic attitudes toward prevailing institutions and they see themselves generally as politically to the left of those in charge of university or national affairs.

Another reason why students today are less likely to be politically active is that unlike their predecessors of the 1960s they have near-total consumer sovereignty. Institutions compete avidly for students, as do individual departments and even individual faculty members whose continued employment depends on enticing student customers. Students can affect the fate of whole departments by voting with their feet. Some students recognize this power and make full use of it, sometimes shamelessly blackmailing their professors into giving them good grades or overlooking plagiarism. But many students have not fully appreciated the extent of their market power. Paradoxically, having lost the euphoria and inflated feelings of power of the late 1960s, many students are gripped by an equally exaggerated feeling of total powerlessness.

The major legacy of the decade of protest may turn out to be the women's liberation movements. Their current form was shaped less by earlier small feminist groups in the Bohemias of our great cities than by the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s. One of the slogans of the 1960s, promulgated by male leaders, was sexual liberation. The effect often was to legitimate sexual exploitation of women, who were accused of jealousy and possessiveness if they sought greater commitment from men who in an earlier day would have been seen as score-keeping philanderers. Women often were given ancillary roles in the civil rights and anti-war movements. Many women concluded that, rather than working for others and others' causes, they should work for their own. Some did so by forming consciousness-raising groups from which men were excluded. These groups operated primarily in university and professional circles but also among educated homemakers who came to consider unpaid work in the home or in the community as exploitation. Others sought direct practical goals through political action, such as equal pay, improved day-care facilities and the right to publicly financed and legitimate abortions.

Why have the women's movements been stronger in a country where women have been in some respects freer than in other countries? I think the answer lies in the lack of protection for gifted and unconventional women in an egalitarian society. In an earlier era we could have a kind of modified Bloomsbury in the Bohemias of our great cities; but as we became more



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egalitarian, women who took positions regarded as eccentric were not protected by class position from same-sex disapproval: they were a threat to other women who believed in traditional matrimony and homemaking, as well as, of course, a threat to men. Hence, in the beginning, young women (usually more adept academically than young men of the same age) felt the need to group themselves together in university to rid themselves of male and patriarchal oppression. In that minority of selective colleges and universities where the activist women have defined themselves as the voice of women, the result can be another kind of oppression: any woman so square and old-fashioned as to admit publicly that she would like to be married, have children, and to have occasional jobs rather than a career, is likely to be scorned if not ostracized.

One wing of the women's movement wishes to overtake and surpass men at the latter's own games. But another wing seeks to bring to the whole society the nurturant and affective aspects of both sexes. One could even say that the counter-culture made available to both sexes the concerns with feeling, with individual states of consciousness, with personal relations, that traditionally have been more characteristic of women in America than of men. In contrast to previous epochs, there is little utopian thought today in America. Most academic Marxists appear to be critical critics, sounding the demonology and the doom of capitalism without much in the way of vision as to how to get from here to there. The women's movements provide an exception.

In the mid-1960s I thought, like most American educators, that we could, in the phrase of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, achieve both quality and equality. At that time our great research universities were emphasizing basic courses. The more selective colleges were beginning programs to recruit students of previously impoverished educational backgrounds. Experiments were made with tutorial programs that would be remedial without being felt as demeaning or condescending.

This effort might have succeeded had there been world enough and time. But the deliquescence of standards during the period of the most violent anti-university protests overtook the slower efforts at careful remedial work. Tutorial and other compensatory programs themselves began to be damned as elitist or even racist—an attempt by middle-class white America to impose its own Received Pronunciation on what was or was claimed to be authentic ghetto speech.

Although the zeal to compensate for past discrimination has begun to wane in the country as a whole, the major universities remain enclaves of idealism. What is envisioned, and not always consciously, is a socialist enclave within a quasi-capitalist order: compensatory, egalitarian, participative, and unconcerned with crass matters of funding, public relations, or even the practical feasibility of finding enough people who are equipped to do or to learn how to do the arduous remedial tasks. It is easier to give "credentials" through edict than to provide a disciplined education that would lead to true equality. But the result is only the illusion of equality—and backlash.

Setbacks in the effort to combine quality with equality are only partly the result of university policies. Test scores at the time of college admission have been declining dramatically. There are many possible reasons for this. Even in educated families, parents rarely read to young children, and schoolteachers must be concerned with discipline and keeping the young amused and are often themselves of extremely limited culture. Young people today have few occasions to write letters; though some young women still keep diaries, the modern forms of peer existence make privacy a rarity. Television encourages a short attention span, and puts schoolteachers and preachers in competition with studio stars (including successful politicians). With the decline of religion outside of evangelical circles, the American Protestant emphasis on reading the Bible has vanished. To develop as a discriminating reader or writer under such conditions is hard. These factors have operated independently of whatever was happening in universities.

Ten years ago, I was very pessimistic (and said so in print) about the growing gap between escalating university costs and diminishing public support, particularly for the more distinguished private institutions and major state universities. It had seemed likely to me then that within this decade many of the leading private institutions would be bankrupt, and the great state universities leveled to parity with their generally far less scholarly regional state rivals. But 10 years later these gloomy prophecies have been only partly fulfilled. Some private institutions of quality have closed; others are on the point of closing; many are running deficits that cannot continue indefinitely. Major public universities, except in the most affluent states like Texas, suffer in deferred maintenance, in ending subscriptions to esoteric journals, in reduced purchase of books for libraries, and in an inability to take advantage of newly opened fields of research. And yet—our great cathedrals of learning still stand, however shakily, and are filled with students, though less literate than the average students of an earlier, more selective day. Our very best students still are as good as they were—perhaps better—and are open and curious. They are willing, as students rarely are in other countries, to take menial part-time jobs to support the increasing costs of university attendance. Seen on a world scale, our alarms about higher learning in America, circa 1978, may be justified as signals of an environment increasingly inhospitable; but on a day-to-day basis the querulousness widely prevalent in academia—as in our society as a whole—is rather like the complaints of a valetudinarian, a spoiled heir still on a plateau of affluence.



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# Arts and Lives

## Stanley Kauffmann on films

### Fin and Fantasy

*Jaws 2* (Universal). Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the movies. . . .

It's odd about film fright. People want to be frightened by—more or less—precisely what frightened them before. Recent examples: *The Exorcist 2* (which flopped because it was *un*frightening, not because it was a sequel); *The Omen 2* (I've seen neither); now *Jaws the Second*. People know what's coming and want it again, like children who want to hear the same ghost stories over and over again.

The surprise in *Jaws 2* is that, given the givens, it came out as well as it did. For me, in terms of sheer visceral zapping, it's better than the first time around (or under). We know that it's going to be a prosperous summer at that New England resort, that the police chief is going to be alerted to shark danger, that the mayor and the money men are going to resist the truth, only to be convinced too late. All these landlubberings are tedious, particularly since Roy Scheider—once again the police chief—is like a mobile totem pole, though slightly less vital: Lorraine Gary—Mrs. Chief—is unbearable: and Murray Hamilton—still mayor—grunches through what seem like out-takes from *Jaws the First*. But the picture scares once in a while.

The director this time, a young Frenchman named Jeannot Szwarc, does better idyll-danger contrasts than did Steven Spielberg, whose work on the first *Jaws* had none of the line of his subsequent work on *Close Encounters*. Szwarc shows a fluency in film language, some ability to let film speak. His slow pans across beaches of gamboling funsters, in Michael Butler's cinematography, have the right TV-commercial feeling of a place where pleasure is impossibly 100 percent. This of course makes a good springboard for the dark stuff. Szwarc also handles the many helicopter shots, swirling along above the ocean surface, and the underwater shooting with more grace and menace than Spielberg. John Williams's music has much more threat than his earlier 1890s rum-ti-tum melodramatic score, and we're spared the dime-store Ahab of the first version, whom Robert Shaw played and who was last seen going down a rubber gullet. The ending here, in which Scheider saves some youngsters by electrifyingly finishing off the shark, is pure comic-book, but what is purer than pure comic-book?

The script is by Carl Gottlieb, who collaborated on the first, and Howard Sackler, who wrote *The Great White Hope* and has moved to the great white shark.

The only question that, for me, interfered with the crude chills of the film may bother others as well: Wouldn't all these people on the screen have *seen* the first *Jaws*? Wouldn't they know that they were living through a—to them—real life remake of a smash-hit picture? Wouldn't these island visitors recognize Scheider and Hamilton?

If there's going to be a *Jaws 3*, why not let Fellini do it? First, he loves the sea: it's a presence in many of his films. But, more important, he could interweave the new "facts" with another dimension: the characters could be living in-and-out of a sense of destiny and dream, a sense that they were fulfilling fates that they had seen in films. Even the third shark might remember the sounds of the first two films and have the added motive of vengeance.

Until we get a *really* interesting version, let's at least say that No. Two gets more skillfully to its simplistic point than No. One.

*Grease* (Paramount). "Everywhere,/giant finned cars nose forward like fish;/a savage servility/slides by on grease."

Robert Lowell's lines were written years before the show came along: the association is mine. Watching the film that was made from the show—which I never saw—I couldn't help thinking of his words. The finned cars are there, all right, and less apparently, so is the servility, trying savagely to find something to be servile to. This film spends its time looking desperately for something to traduce. "Corruption Available; Name Your Object" is the sign that ought to hang around its neck.

I'm told that the show, now the longest-running hit on Broadway, is a faithful, empathic recreation of urban high-school life in the 1950s. The film is neither empathic, urban, nor a recreation. It takes place in milk-shake country; is paradoxically populated by martini drinkers (most of the cast are at least 10 years too old); and is neither a nostalgia trip to the slicked-hair high-school life of the '50s nor a consistent satire on it. With minimal adjustments it could have been an early '30s college musical with Buddy Rogers and Jack Oakie or a present-day suburban pothead picture. Insofar as it's important enough to be called terrible, what's terrible about it is its eagerness to make us feel superior to *something*, though it's not quite sure what. It has no book to speak of. To put it another way, the book is unspeakable. The music goes in one ear and out the same ear. It has no kind

#### Films Worth Seeing

*Cat and Mouse.* Smooth little French murder mystery, more charm than chills. Very pleasant.

*F.I.S.T.* If you don't mind US labor history used for movie melodrama, this is a pretty good one. Sylvester Stallone bulldozes through the decades.

*Go Tell the Spartans.* The best fiction film so far about Vietnam war. Some trappings of conventional gung-ho flick, but it really faces complexities and snares. Set in 1964, 11 years before US finally exited.

*Pirosmani.* A gentle Soviet picture about an (actual) primitive painter, turn of the century. Done with a fine eye and dramatically successful quiet.

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of focus in atmosphere or tone, it doesn't even have a *look*. It's just a sort of floating insult, shopping for a subject to light on.

Three things in it are worth mention. A number with Frankie Avalon called "Beauty School Dropout" has a super-Disney glitz that's amusing. It's the one number that seems to know its dimensions and purpose.

Stockard Channing confirms—reconfirms, as the airlines say—her talent. She was good, and wasted, in *The Fortune*. She is good, and wasted, here. Even though she's much too old for the high-school toughie she plays, she is sturdily sexy and sharp.

John Travolta, who was in the Broadway *Grease* for a while, is reconfirmed too. He sings pleasantly, and he does more vivid phallocratic dancing, as in *Saturday Night Fever*. He's not really *good*, but that's not his fault—there's no part, just a lot of twaddle. He does show, however, that he shares one difficulty with Al Pacino, in being (let's call it) frontally nice. Pacino's "winning" smile in *Bobby Deerfield* was grotesque: a lot of chinaware on enforced display. That's not true of Travolta, still his appeal doesn't yet work head-on, it works sideways, obliquely, through tensions, like Cagney's and Bogart's. I remember the small shock in *Yankee Doodle Dandy* and *The African Queen* when, for the first time, those two men played straight-on sympathetic characters. It took some getting used to. Travolta was more likable in his aggressive *Fever* role than he is in his sympathetic moments here. But his power is truly powerful, and he should thrive.

Coincidence: the cinematographer was Bill Butler, who did the first *Jaws*.

*Slave of Love* (Cinema 5). A different Movieland. One by-product of this Soviet film is to show that Russian filmmaking did not begin with the Revolution. In fact, Jay Leyda's *Kino* (1960), the standard history of Russian film, devotes about a fifth of its text to pre-Soviet activity.

The story takes place on the border of the Revolution, literally and symbolically. A studio is making a silly film in 1917 somewhere in the south—Yalta and Odessa were both "Hollywoods," and I'm not sure which is meant. The Revolution is approaching, but the studio tries to concentrate on its romantic flummery and is supported by the Whites, in the person of a villainous counterespionage officer. The director (played by Alexander Kalyagin) is plutocratically depraved—after all, he's plump and smokes cigars—and is concerned only about completing his commercial product despite the approaching realities. The star of the film (Elena Solovey) is turned from frivolous egocentricity to gravity by the cameraman (the handsome Rodion Nakhapetov), who is her lover and a secret revolutionary.

Nikita Mikhalkov, who directed, seems to have studied his Ophuls and Fellini: he has a sense of richness through detail and of theatrical imagery. The very blatancy of the film—it has no subtlety in script or execution—bullies us into some response after a while. There is a murder in a deserted city square that is handled like ballet, seen in one protracted long shot. There is a final sequence in which the heroine is alone and helpless on a racing tram, pursued by White cavalrymen. These are somewhat too patently *meant* to be memorable images, but they succeed. The whole picture is a bit too proud of itself, too thematically pat; but as is occasionally true with show-offs, there's something to its showing-off.

# James Lardner on television

## VTR's Last Tape?

After much dilly-dallying, Congress passed a new copyright act a year and a half ago, guaranteeing our modern artists a degree and duration of protection for their work far beyond that enjoyed by any of their forebears. A piece of writing, henceforth, will remain copyrighted until 50 years after the author's death, compared to the old term of 28 years renewable for another 28. In the case of a work for hire—a category that includes most motion pictures and television programs as well as the very article you are reading—the copyright will last a flat 75 years.

But while Congress has made life considerably sweeter for corporate and private authors alike, it has not, mercifully, settled every little legal uncertainty among the members of this highly contentious fraternity. It will still fall to the courts to decide, for instance, the messy question of whether the 300,000 Americans who own videotape recorders are breaking the law when they copy a TV show off the air. That, in sum, is the view of Universal Studios and Walt Disney Productions, who filed suit two years ago against the Sony Corporation and a host of codefendants, asking (a) to have VTRs removed from the marketplace, and (b) for damages so vast that the plaintiffs declined even to set the usual preposterous asking price.

The resolution of this tangled case—besides being nowhere in sight, as you might expect of a dispute involving such well-heeled litigants—seems to turn on the precise dimensions of what is called the "fair use" of copyrighted matter. Although no one has defined "fair use" in any terribly useful way, this is the doctrine that gives book reviewers, historians and parodists the right to quote, summarize and misrepresent other writers' works. A few potentially troublesome applications of the doctrine—chiefly to do with photocopying machines, jukeboxes and cable TV—are at least addressed, if not necessarily settled, by the new copyright act. But otherwise we are left to decide what is or isn't "fair use" on a case-by-case basis, according to such factors as the amount of material used, the nature of the original work and of the new use to which it has been put (how serious? how commercial?), and the impact of the use on the continuing market for the original work.

Obviously, there is plenty of room for argument here. The legality of making videotape copies of TV programs is as messy and muddy an issue as it could possibly be, and it is so for a simple reason. The concept of copyright protection was just never designed with 20th-century technology in mind, and from the century's very beginnings there has been a Keystone Kops flavor to the whole effort to adapt the one to the other.

Some of the stranger questions raised over the years, and, as a rule, unsatisfactorily resolved, were these: Was it infringement to punch a copyrighted piece of music onto a piano roll? (No, the Supreme Court decided, improbably.)



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Could a landlord install a building-wide radio antenna without the permission of broadcasters or authors? (Perhaps, said the court, and perhaps not, setting a precedent that proved to be of little help when the problem of cable TV arose decades later.) And how frequently was a fabric manufacturer obliged to print the required notice of copyright on a repeating-design fabric? (A whole body of case law exists on this one.)

Until about 1912, a movie was thought of essentially as a collection of still pictures, so in one of the strangest of all applications of old law to new technology, moviemakers were encouraged to submit "paper prints" of early silent films when registering those works for copyright. This was a quirk that had the completely unexpected virtue, half a century later, of making it possible to recreate some precious movie antiques that would otherwise have been lost forever. The paper prints, in these cases, had outlived all other versions. (One film preservationist, a former FBI agent named Kemp Niver, went so far as to develop an elaborate process for correcting the distortions and wrinkles that developed with the aging of paper prints.)

Although paper prints are no more, vexing questions remain. If I come mysteriously into possession of a copyrighted movie and show it to a few close friends in the privacy of my home, is that an act of infringement? No one seems very sure. If I am harboring, to be more specific, a print of *Star Wars* in my closet that 20th-Century Fox would like to repossess, must they prove just when, where and how I illegally obtained it? Or is it sufficient for them to show, by indirection, that there was no strictly legal route by which I could have done so? As I said before, this is muddy territory. Very muddy.

My sole authority on these matters, a friend who has practiced some copyright law in his time, says of *Universal et al* v. *Sony et al* that "strictly on the merits, the case is probably with the studios." It may be more expedient to let VTRs alone now that they are staring plaintively at us from every appliance store window, he concedes, but there is a real possibility that the courts will compel VTR makers and buyers to pay some sort of compensation to the producers of the material waiting to be copied. In any event, my authority and I share a feeling that sooner or later, somehow or other, the VTR industry will not be the winner in this deal.

The word "revolutionary" has been bandied about a good deal in discussions of VTRs. They will have "revolutionary" effects, it is said, on both the motion picture and television industries, not to mention you and me. The networks will no longer be in a position to tell viewers what shows to watch and when. Movie distributors and exhibitors, likewise, will lose leverage as Americans learn they can set their own entertainment schedules, dispense with babysitters, and have that six-pack of beer at the ready.

Well, it is a reasonably safe generalization, it seems to me, that when most of the people in the know predict that something is going to have "revolutionary" consequences, it won't. There are signs already that VTR buyers are tiring of their acquisitions. That high-powered couple who simply can't get home to watch the latest "Masterpiece Theater" is finding they can't get home to watch a videotape of it, either. When they *are* home, they unaccountably choose some inferior over-the-air show instead of one of the highbrow tapes from their collection—it just seems easier, or perhaps they subconsciously look forward to comparing notes with friends, neighbors and co-workers the next day. And just as mysteriously, they still find time to go to the movies—for a dark, gregarious, formal experience that is not at all easy to duplicate in a living room.

Cable TV, which promises to yield some of the very same results envisioned for VTRs—a wider range of programs aimed at narrower audiences—threatens, too, to make VTRs still less desirable for the entertainment-oriented viewer. While the growth of cable systems has fallen short of early predictions, it is worth noting that about 50 times as many Americans are now hooked into them as own VTRs.

In the most widely broadcast VTR commercial—for the Sony Betamax—a smartass New York cabdriver informs his colleagues on the graveyard shift that he is going home to watch "The Late Show." They look at him very strangely—as if he is slightly off his rocker. They may be onto something.

# Books Considered

## John Grierson: Film Master
## by James Beveridge
(Macmillan; $17.95)

"When a director dies, he becomes a photographer." Those eight words must rank high in any list of film truisms past and present. John Grierson's famous line has cropped up again and again throughout cinema history, never more often than in the last decade or so when it's been used as a truncheon against various efforts by great directors in decline. (Antonioni much of the time, Fellini to a lesser extent.) The phrase is familiar, but what about the man who said it?

"A great theorist and a great activist in communications" is how biographer James Beveridge sums up his subject. John Grierson was, on the basis of common knowledge and facts made apparent in this book, the father of what we call documentary film. Born in Scotland in 1898, he worked primarily in Canada, London, and the United States as theorist, administrator, distributor, intellectual, and filmmaker before his death in 1972. Coming of age toward the end of an era which World War I finished off conclusively, Grierson foresaw the need for a new esthetic to match the explosion of untried philosophies, egalitarian standards, and technological marvels. Like Lenin, like Chaplin (each of whom he admired for different reasons), Grierson was born at just the right time for his achievements to have maximum effect.

"We operate in a new world, but are not yet possessed of it . . . I look on cinema as a pulpit, and use it as a propagandist." These lines embrace Grierson's filmic credo. Anticipating the need for cinematic innovation, he (very early) came to feel that the use of documentary film could implement social change. While a student at the Univer-


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sity of Chicago in the mid-1920s, he first made a pilgrimage out to Hollywood, sure that American films would provide the medium for a "truly informed and educated citizenry" which the press seemed loath to encourage. (His reaction to Pickford, Valentino, *et al.* is not recorded.) He did meet Robert Flaherty, creator of *Nanook of the North* and other films about "natural man" in his native settings, and this meeting convinced Grierson to rush back to Britain to drum up support for his first staggering project—the dissemination of hundreds of films reflecting issues of the era to a mass audience conditioned to froth and fiction. Years later, in reaction to McLuhan, Grierson would mischievously reminisce:

> *I have been correctly associated with the Message rather than the Medium. There have been moments when I've said the Hell with the Message and had rather an affection for the Medium, but I was always scared that I might be found out, so I was careful to say the Hell with Art.*

Throughout the 1930s, Grierson's influence grew enormously as new filmmakers and theorists gravitated to his Film Centre in Soho Square, spreading the populist-documentary faith far and wide. One of the most impressive films to emerge from the Centre, *Night Mail*, amazed audiences with its pioneering use of non-professional actors, as author Beveridge recalls: "One could almost see into their pores. They spoke a strange language, that of working-class England—a language not readily understood by the North American ear. . . ." Until Grierson and company came along, workingmen were comic butts in film (butlers, cab drivers, maids, shop-

RAMON
NOVARRO
CONRAD NAGEL
MARJORIE RAMBEAU
MADGE EVANS
AUBREY SMITH
Son of India
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girls): their sudden elevation to parity with middle and upper-class characters as *serious* subject was a small revolution through artistic means.

But Grierson wasn't content to rest on his laurels. In 1939 he went to Canada and helped implement the National Film Board, designed to establish a national identity for a country often assumed to be an offshoot of the giant to the south. (Grierson's motto: think North.) With the end of World War II, his career faltered: denied an American visa in the suspicious cold war climate prevalent then (Cinema as a tool to educate the masses? One shudders to contemplate a hypothetical confrontation between Grierson and, say, the young Richard Nixon.), he moved restlessly on to Paris, then back to Britain, advising on films for UNESCO and overseeing the television series "This Wonderful World." But television, for all its power and analytical potential vis-à-vis social issues, never thrilled Grierson as actual film documentary had. His summary of TV: "Undue pursuit of the immediate does not permit the pursuit of excellence."

Still, he wasn't through yet. He journeyed to India—at age 70—to help with a broad family planning campaign, and took some swipes at the Indian film industry for courting prizes and ignoring the rural millions. ("I tore them to pieces!" Grierson exults.) His curmudgeon qualities multiplied in his last years: he defended censorship, blasted student radicals, seemed an exponent of the status quo. Yet the last part of *John Grierson: Film Master* is the most touching. In his eighth decade, this man undertook a final assignment, teaching communications at McGill University in Toronto, and the recorded reactions of his ex-students—baffled, resentful, yet excited by what they had learned—are his best epitaph.

A fascinating figure, a filmic Populist—and a prophet without all the honor he merits. For all the work that clearly went into this study of Grierson's career, the results are only so-so. First, it's not a strict biography *per se*, but a series of mini-essays and interviews. Twenty-five of the 40-odd interviews are culled and edited from a film, *Grierson*, made in 1972. So this book is an effort in print to approximate the rhythm and flow of a 58-minute movie, and inevitably there are arid stretches as one interview follows on the heels of another. There are many interesting disciples of Grierson represented, from co-workers like Alberto Cavalcanti to admirers and critics like Lewis Jacobs and Bosley Crowther. There are filmmakers, typists, editors, arts ministers, commentators. (Some surprises: I never knew that Lorne Greene of "Bonanza" fame did voice-overs à la Westbrook Van Voorhis for the NFB's wartime documentaries.) Relatives, students and producers. Every Griersonite imaginable, which has the ironic effect of dulling our own admiration. Couldn't a few doubts have been expressed, or a few naysayers included among the hymns of praise?

There are other lacunae. Grierson's influence on the Italian Neorealists is merely skimmed over in a session with Rossellini. Boris Kaufman (Jean Vigo's cameraman) is interviewed, but Grierson's effect (if any) on Vigo never comes

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up. We're told that Grierson's own film *Drifters* was shown with Eisenstein's *Potemkin* and is hailed as "a major seminal film," but Beveridge seems to think that's all that needs to be said about it. More than once the author's style goes off the tracks in an orgy of listmaking: "pride, vanity, and hyperbole" . . . "weaknesses, lusts, contradictions, and vanities" . . . "insights, concepts, intuitions, and judgements" . . . "organization, rationality, and duty" . . . "fellowman, the community, the state, the commonweal." The man gets obscured in clouds of abstraction.

To Beveridge's credit, he modestly urges us not to regard his book as a definitive report. (Forsyth Hardy, cofounder of the Edinburgh Film Festival, is Grierson's official biographer.) But it's not too strong to say that few of the "contradictions" in Grierson's very long career rise to the surface for our perusal, and that a colorful, even fanatical figure of indisputable importance appears gray and slightly pedantic in *John Grierson: Film Master*. "We never had any committee meetings at all," recalls Cavalcanti. "All our discussions were in the pub—after work!" One wants to know less about the Grierson of committee meetings and more about the man who, over a gin-and-bitters and maybe a game of darts, plotted the latest innovations in the world's newest art form.

**Steve Lawson**

*Steve Lawson* writes on film and drama and is dramaturge for the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

## Great Film Directors: A Critical Anthology edited by Leo Braudy and Morris Dickstein

(Oxford University Press; $7.50)

Most self-conscious moviegoers enjoy rating directors. In the 1950s and 1960s, though, the "rating game" became an obsession for the critics of the Parisian film journal *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Their top 10 directors chosen from 1954 to 1968, as Michael Wilmington has compiled it, are Max Ophuls, Jean-Luc Godard, Robert Bresson, Carl Dreyer, Luis Buñuel, Orson Welles, Kenji Mizoguchi, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, and Ingmar Bergman. The list is interesting, provocative, and ultimately infuriating. A devoted champion of American film can well ask, "Where's John Ford?" And the critic's counterpart for European film can jibe with equal force, "What about Antonioni?"

What is important about the list, however, is not its omissions but its nature as an undertaking. It shows that, unlike literature and the fine arts, cinema has no established canon. Furthermore, it explains the polemical quality of much film criticism: it is written as much for partisanship as for insight. The youngest child in the family of criticism, it has frequent tantrums.

As a mature response to the bewildering variety of prejudicial film criticism, the new anthology *Great Film Directors* by Leo Braudy and Morris Dickstein is excellent; indeed, without competition among the stacks of new movie books. The editors accept diversity, and that is the key to the book's success. The 23 directors they chose for inclusion are, in their words, "so diverse in their careers—though of distinguished stature in their achievement—that no model could be fitted together from their best works." By moving away from the notion of an ideal model, by shifting from deduction to induction as a principle for selection, Braudy and Dickstein can include directors as different as Sergei Eisenstein, whose influential montage technique always served his Marxism, and Joseph von Sternberg, whose famous lighting and composition always served his belief in a film world unrelated to our own. Moreover, the editors' principles let them include an enticing array of critics: academics (John Freccero, Gerald Mast, Michael Wood), intellectual freelancers (Pauline Kael, Edmund Wilson, Susan Sontag), novelists (Graham Greene and Carlos Fuentes), filmmakers (Luis Buñuel, François Truffaut, Satyajit Ray), and others.

Still, to insure that diversity does not lapse into disorder Braudy and Dickstein give shape to the book by concentrating on the individual careers of directors and the "special qualities of the most important films." "So long as one responds to individual films," they argue, "and that response modifies one's ideas of what is possible for film to do, one must also, if only for shorthand, attribute the shaping of that film to a primary creative force, the director." Furthermore, "the career of a film director—the foundation and elaboration of his favorite techniques, images, stories, and performers—offers a unique opportunity to study the interaction of personal, social, historical, and formal causes in the creation of art." As a way to help the reader take advantage of the "unique opportunity," the editors introduce each director with a sketch which surveys his career; then they present views by several writers of each director.

Looking back over the careers of the directors, Braudy and Dickstein find that they seem to form three loosely gathered traditions. The first is the "flamboyant genius." Its prototypes are Georges Méliès, creator of magical short films in the 1890s, and D.W. Griffith, shaper of the first important film epic *Birth of a Nation*. Followers in the tradition include Joseph von Sternberg, Erich von Stroheim, Cecil B. DeMille, and Orson Welles. These creators pose the critical problem of separating substantial accomplishment from a myth of the director's personality.

The second tradition is the "retiring professional craftsman." Among this number are both Hollywood veterans like Howard Hawks and John Ford, who shunned personal publicity, and European individualists like Carl Dreyer and Robert Bresson, who have been devoted solely to their art. They all raise the same critical questions. Where does the

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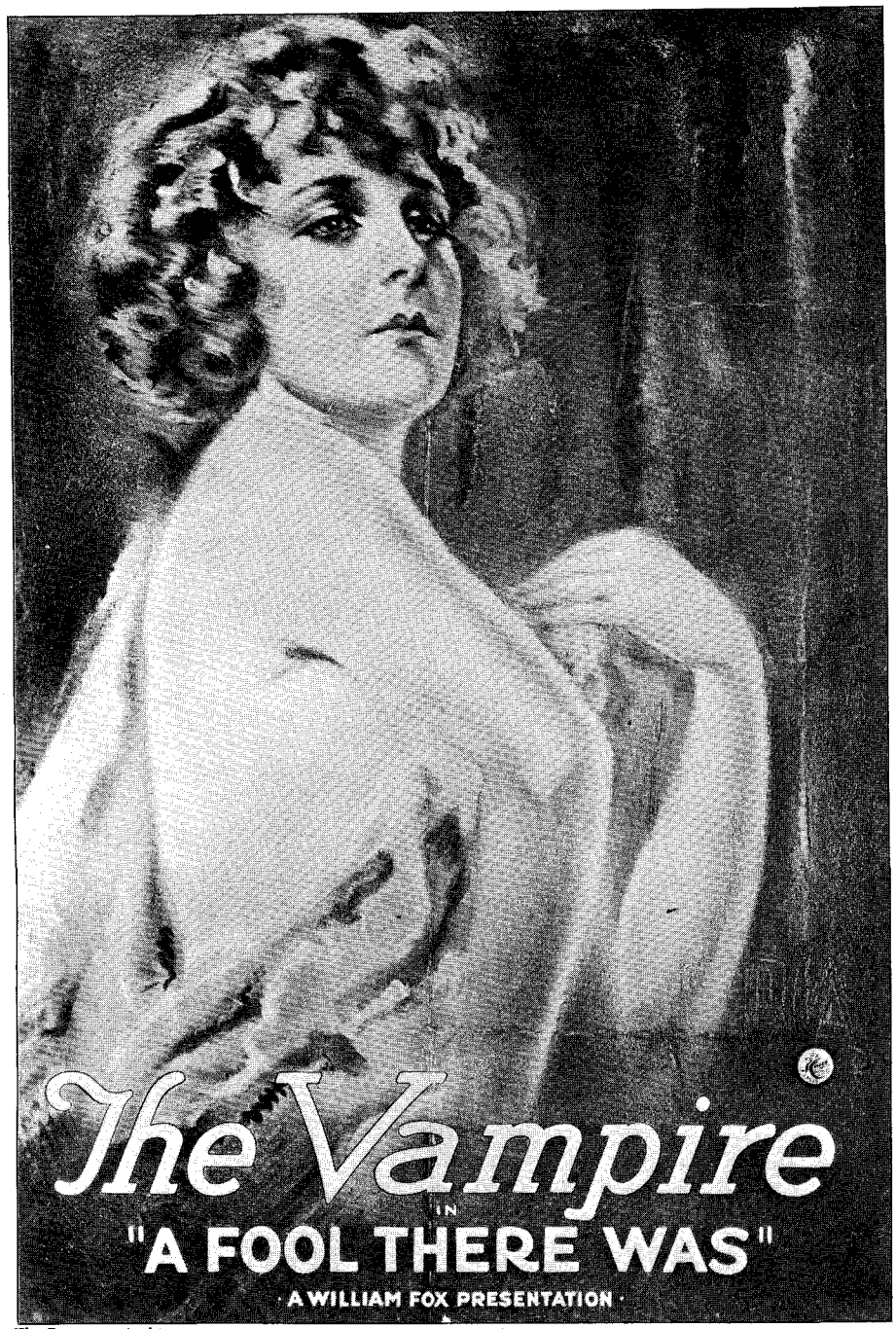

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director stand behind his work? What is the relationship between collaboration and vision?

The third variety of director, less frequently found than the other two, yet usually sharing some qualities with them, is the "film theoretician." These artists have expressed in writings as well as in films their feelings and beliefs about esthetic underpinnings and ideological biases of film as a medium. The French New Wave (Truffaut, Godard, and Chabrol), the Soviet Modernists (Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Vertov), and the Italian Neorealists (Rossellini, de Sica, and their writer-collaborator Zavattini) all have matched critical statement with artistic performance. At first glance, the job of appreciating these filmmakers would seem easier than that of appreciating others: they state or strongly imply their own standards for judgment. But, in fact, their theorizing complicates rather than simplifies the critical process. The critic must deal with the theory and the films as separate entities *and* as components of a dialectic.

What becomes clear, then, from Braudy's and Dickstein's groupings of directors is that their emphasis on diversity is more than kind-hearted liberalism or a commercial strategy. No single point of view can give adequate answers to the mass of questions raised by the variety of directors judged great by a large portion of intelligent viewers. The notion of multiple points of view is a commonplace, of course, in other critical

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traditions. This is not so in film studies. Here the editors have done a great service. Their clear, logical, and well documented introduction can serve as a cornerstone argument for discriminating, yet open-minded pluralism in film studies.

As with their theory, so with their practice. Take, for example, the selections by Gerald Mast and Luis Buñuel characterizing Buster Keaton's talent. For Mast, "a driving, 'indomitable' narrative line; outrageously inventive physical gags that serve both narrative and character; a tiny human figure with an amazing agile, acrobatic body and a constantly alert, strategic brain; vast panoramas, clever parody, melodrama, romance, costumes, elegance, grace; camera tricks and visual surprises—these are the elements that fuse to form the Keaton comic world." This summary, based on ample preceding evidence, is a fine instance of academic criticism; in fact, Mast's rhetoric can easily convince us that the last word has been said.

That is, until we read Buñuel: "Liberated from tradition, our outlook is rejuvenated in the youthful and temperate world of Buster, the great specialist against all sentimental infection. . . . Buster never tries to make us cry, because he knows that easy tears are valueless. Yet he is not who makes us laugh belly laughs. We never for a moment stop smiling, not at him but from ourselves, the smile of health and olympian force." Like Mast, Buñuel tells us something about the essential Buster: he liberates and rejuvenates. Unlike Mast, though, Buñuel moves by assertion rather than argument. Nonetheless, his insight is valuable not only for what it says about Keaton, but for what it reflects about his own genesis as a filmmaker. In his works, there are no "easy tears," and a sneer at ourselves is more appropriate than a belly laugh at the characters. Oddly enough, Keaton, the consummate naive clown, helped liberate Buñuel, the surrealist dissector of the wordly wise.

If Mast and Buñuel act as complements, others do not. Manny Farber takes Howard Hawks to be "the master of the ambulance, speed-boat, flying-saucer movie." For Jacques Rivette, on the other hand, Hawks is "solely preoccupied with the adventure of the intellect." It is hard to see how these men can be discussing the same director. Even so, including elements which do not harmonize is part of the anthologist's responsibility.

Balanced in intellectual design and broad in scope, the anthology has another virtue which should not be overlooked. It is peppered with immensely enjoyable, anecdotal information. To shoot the awesome last scene of *Throne of Blood* in which the protagonist is murdered in his own fort, for instance, Kurosawa "stationed real archers just out of camera range (about ten feet from the actor) and had them shoot real arrows, full force, point blank." Donald Richie relates this story to Kurosawa's passion for the "actuality of whatever is going to be photographed," and what he says seems sensible and true. But the anecdote is not simply a part in a whole argument; it, like many others in the book, gives pleasure as a story.

**Jerry W. Carlson**

*Jerry W. Carlson* teaches film and literature at DePaul University.

## Media-Made Dixie: The South in the American Imagination by Jack Temple Kirby

(Louisiana State University Press; $9.95)

Each region of the country has its own accumulations of legend and myth as well as its own sectional pride, but the South has always been especially rich in its local color. Atmospheric, moody, steamy, the South has been a breeding ground for writers with bizarre sensibilities expressed in often quirky, audacious styles. Jack Temple Kirby's conservative new study, however, while acknowledging the neurotic strain in books and films set in the South, is intended at least in part to counteract the popular image of the grotesque South by presenting the region as essentially wholesome, family-oriented, God-fearing, and hard-working. His attempt at a kind of moral resurrection is quaint, though of course doomed.

Examining the shifting of the South as it has been both reflected in and shaped by the popular media, Kirby covers an enormous sweep of material, from D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* to Robert Altman's *Nashville*, from Thomas Dixon's maniacally racist *The Klansman* to *Roots*, from the racist histories of Reconstruction written by William Dunning and followers to the revisionist works by W.E.B. DuBois, from the sentimental romances of John Fox and Thomas Nelson Page to the sexual ravings of Kyle Onstott, from Erskine Caldwell to the Waltons, from liquor ads that exploit antebellum luxury to the folksy South of Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken.

"Critical perception is not the subject of this book," Kirby states. "Popular perception is." Kirby therefore writes as a historian of popular culture. The books and films he concentrates on are the ones that have received the greatest public acceptance, and so he spends more time, for instance, on the popularly conceived romances of Frank Yerby, with their entertaining and historically inaccurate renditions of aristocratic plantation life, than on the far more individual and highly wrought regional sensibility of William Faulkner. Because his work proved too knotty, too coiled and intricate, to reach the best-seller lists, Faulkner—surely the greatest Southern writer of the century—is relegated to a distinctly minor role here. A history of popular taste is of course a legitimate pursuit, but what is a little unsettling about Kirby's approach is his cool acceptance of mass-market material. Kirby records with maddening aloofness the financial success of sometimes stylistically inferior and even vicious material. The author seems in fact to be more tolerant of the popular craftsman—the writer or filmmaker or historian whose work is easily accessible and makes no real attempt to challenge general preconceptions—than of the artist with a radical vision and an anti-traditional style.

Writing from a quietly pro-Southern stance, Kirby has limited patience for artists who have capitalized on negative aspects of the South. He criticizes Erskine Caldwell for his misleading portraits of the region as a hotbed of seething, degenerate sexuality, as the underbelly of the nation, the place where the id runs wild. And he considers



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Tennessee Williams as especially damaging to Southern reputation since his famous plays, later adapted into successful films, reinforced the popular image of the South as the home of sexual hysterics, of assorted misfits and malcontents. Kirby is clearly uncomfortable with Williams's benighted South, where almost every woman is, like Blanche DuBois, a fatally unstable compound of gentility and rapacity, in whom faded antebellum charm wars with animalistic urges, and where almost every man proves, beneath his aura of erotic promise, to be only a female-dominated coward.

Reluctantly, Kirby grants to writers like Caldwell and Williams a measure of artistic power, but he really wants to correct the misconceptions about the South which have been prompted by the excesses of high-strung Southern Gothic. He also reacts defensively to the use of the South as a metaphor for national ailments, and so he is especially angered by *Nashville* because it co-opts the region as a microcosm for the moral and political bankruptcy of contemporary America. Only marginally concerned with the film's formal innovations and technical brilliance, he attacks it for its facile anti-Southern symbolism, for (in a sense) the public relations damage it causes by using the South as a focus for whatever the filmmaker feels is rotten about the nation.

Kirby prefers material with a more upbeat treatment of Southern temperament. He likes liberal, stylistically traditional films like *Pinky, Conrack, Sounder,* and *In the Heat of the Night* in which blacks are presented with dignity and whites, at least tentatively, are seen as struggling to come to terms with their racist inheritance. He is drawn, in short, to stories about reconciliation and integration. He salutes Stanley Kramer, Hollywood's ultimate conservative liberal, for attempting, in films like *Home of the Brave* and *The Defiant Ones,* to offer a more moderate and humanitarian treatment of Southern racial tension. He applauds *Roots* not only for its readjustments of history but also for not, finally, excluding whites from the search for roots: "The novel/teleplay are," he writes, "in an obvious sense hostile and provocative: They shout at white Americans the sorriest theme in their history. But Haley's mission is conservative and healing most of all. His book climaxes the work of neo-abolitionists, yet he asserts that all Americans may find solace and inspiring identity in family roots." He points with pride to the positive image of the South presented on "The Waltons," where the region is seen as the epitome of the rural ideal, as the vindication of the values of family and of the close-knit Christian community.

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Plainly preferring the mellow South of the Waltons to the savage South of Tennessee Williams, Kirby does in fairness give full space to some of the great works that he finds embarrassing or inaccurate—provided that they meet his criterion of popular acceptance. He begins the book with a discussion of Griffith's ferocious, pockmarked masterpiece, *The Birth of a Nation,* in which Reconstruction is depicted as a conspiracy between upstart, meddlesome Yankees and demented freed blacks to destroy the racial purity of the family-centered, gracious Old South, with its paternalistic masters and fawning Uncle Toms. Griffith's fear and hatred of blacks are palpably rendered, and yet the director claimed he was merely presenting history, not rearranging it according to personal obsession. Unaware of the mania his film contained, Griffith believed to the end of his life that *The Birth of a Nation* told the true story of Reconstruction. Kirby reacts with genteel disapproval to Griffith's passionate landmark epic, regarding it as one of the primary sources of liberal Eastern horror of Southern racism. He suggests, however, that the film confirmed prejudices shared by a majority of Americans and that Griffith, in addition to being a patriotic Southerner, was also a shrewd businessman who shaped his extravagant version of Reconstruction according to popular demand.

Kirby also gives prolonged attention to W. J. Cash's seminal study, *The Mind of the South,* which in its own smaller scale was as influential as Griffith's film in fostering unfavorable images of the region. Published in 1941, Cash's monumental book is an impressionistic, outrageous report, written by a Southerner, about the assorted disgraces of the South. Cash anxiously dispels popular notions about the structure of Southern society; he dismisses as utterly fanciful the nostalgic evocations of the Old South (on the order of *Gone With the Wind*) as a plantation society of aristocratic charm and grace, of dashing beaux and devastating belles—the South, he argues, was settled not by aristocrats but by an aggressive, hard-working yeomanry, an upwardly mobile middle

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class, which was far more prevalent than the blue blood planters and the poor white trash of popular folklore. A passionate denunciation of racism, of white males bonding across class lines, of Southern violence, laziness, religious hysteria, demagoguery, love of oratory, sexual and moral hypocrisy, sexual and moral fanaticism, enclosed and tribal social patterns, the book also pays tribute to Southern honor, loyalty, patriotism, love of family, and sociability. Written by an embittered Southerner in love with the territory, *The Mind of the South* both perpetuates and smashes regional stereotypes. It is spectacularly written, with the lush, rolling sentences, the oratorical flourish, the fierce partisanship, the exhilarating drive, that Kirby's moderate book deliberately avoids. Kirby is determined to impress us with the fact that not all Southerners are hot-headed and single-minded, and so as he confronts material that is sometimes perverse, idiosyncratic, virulently racist, he remains noticeably even-tempered, a calm master of ceremonies whose own mellow, sensible liberalism is intended as a corrective to examples of Southern excess.

Kirby concludes by admitting his hope of the Carter presidency redeeming the South has been shattered by his realization that "the very national acceptance of the South amounts to a death warrant for regional distinctiveness." For Kirby, however, there is a consolation in regional synthesis: if the South has been absorbed into the rest of the country, then it can no longer be singled out as a blight and embarrassment to the nation; Kirby is happier having no discernible South rather than one that carries the distinguishing characteristics of neurotic, savage, visceral, racist, and tribal. With a feeling very close to relief, the author looks to Carter as being "the ultimate American regional synthesizer. As his administration proceeds and the Georgia accents gradually seep past amazement into the everyday, Dixie's interment may occur almost unnoticed. Only the retrospective may consider the paradoxical applicability of Griffith's most famous title, this time without militance or bigotry, a Birth of a Nation."

**Foster Hirsch**

*Foster Hirsch* is author of a study of Tennessee Williams to be published this autumn.


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## American Silent Film
## by William K. Everson

(Oxford University Press; $17.50)

If sensation-gorged sound movie audiences think about silent films at all, it is in that narrow category bounded by the ridiculous on one side and the grotesque on the other. If silent films are not pratfalls, custard pies and people moving too fast, they are desiccated relics like Gloria Swanson's Norma Desmond in Billy Wilder's stark *Sunset Boulevard*, whispering about how "we didn't need words, we had faces then." And when they do chance to see silent films, William Everson writes, "all too many contemporary audiences consider it smart and sophisticated to laugh at them, and go to them looking for an excuse to laugh."

To William Everson, this is heresy of the first order. To him the silent film is a world unto itself, with its own royalty and its own rules. "It cannot be stressed too strongly that the sound motion picture was an entirely different medium from the silent motion picture and not merely the extension of it," he says. "The difference between the two media is literally the difference between painting and photography, and the frequent unreality—or stylized reality—of much of the camerawork of the silent film was, artistically, one of its greatest assets."

Everson is not just sounding off, he is talking on the basis of having seen almost every silent film available for viewing, plus most of the sound ones as well. A recognized authority on the Western film, he was a deft choice to do this, the first volume in a projected Oxford University Press history of the American film, and a book that lives up to its ballyhoo as the best modern survey of the silent period, complete with a more-than-ample selection of haunting stills, a book in the tradition of earlier classic histories like Lewis Jacobs's *The Rise of the American Film*, Paul Rotha's *The Film Till Now*, and Kevin Brownlow's more recent *The Parade Gone By*.

As an art form, film continually surprises by its youth and by the fact that its earliest products didn't give observers much hope for the future. It was in February, 1893, that the world's first movie studio opened in presumably scenic East Orange, New Jersey, and proceeded to turn out its very first product: *Fred Ott's Sneeze*, in tight close-up no less.

Though many things have obviously changed since Mr. Ott, a surprising number of film's facets, as Everson astutely points out, have survived unchanged. From its very beginnings, he emphasizes, film was a business as well as an art, and from the first it capitalized on "the kind of shock and sensation that could not be presented on stage," giving early audiences everything from lurid (not really) kisses to Edison's *Electrocution of an Elephant*, "a grisly piece of footage more because we *know* it is real than because of what it actually shows."

Year by year, practically film by film, Everson takes us through the silent era from those primitive starts to mature



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classics like von Stroheim's *Greed* and F.W. Murnau's luminous *Sunrise*, the author's slightly hedged choice as "a climax to the art of silent film . . . a textbook illustration not only of what the silent film could achieve despite the lack of dialogue, but, on the contrary, what it could achieve because of it."

Though he deals extensively with films and directors rediscovered since the last silent histories, Everson's virtue lies not in pioneering. Rather it is in his feeling for grasp and synthesis, the almost tangible sense he conveys that he has seen and absorbed everything worth seeing, plus much that isn't, and is able to pass it all on in cogent form.

So while one may wish at times that Everson wouldn't enthuse quite so much over quite so many items no one else has seen, the bonus comes when he arrives at much discussed films like Edward Porter's 1903 *The Great Train Robbery* and is able to definitively say that while hardly the first plotted film, as is often claimed, it is "certainly the first American film in which a narrative structure was *recognized*, and in which the name of the director was acknowledged." It's certainly nice to have the record set straight after 75 years.

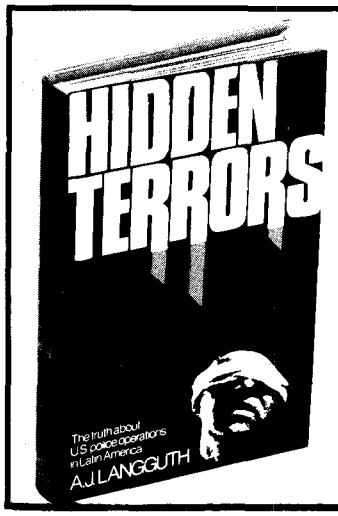
An added bonus from Everson's maniacal thoroughness is that he turns up various charming odds and ends from the silents' history, tidbits that intrigue as well as educate. We learn, for instance, that in 1924 one of the last of the great overland cattle drives was considered for filming but rejected as "not colorful enough" for inclusion in a moving picture, and that it was not unusual to have two wildly unrelated films shot almost simultaneously on the same location as an economy measure, as when a dramatic sand dune was used as a backdrop for a William S. Hart western and then, "without even a change of camera angle," it was taken over as the set for a drama of exotic India called "The Beggar of Cawnpore." Only in Hollywood can such things happen.

Dominating the book, and with good reason, is the courtly, egotistical, Victorian figure of David Wark Griffith, the director who was regarded as the artistic pinnacle of his time as well as the standard against which all current popular entertainment was measured. Placing him, as Everson does, against the minutely detailed strivings of his contemporaries merely serves to emphasize how extraordinary his own accomplishments were.

Just for openers, between 1908 and 1913, Griffith, in the course of directing more than 400 one-reelers, almost unilaterally "created the whole language of film," a language he used to spectacular effect with his 1915 *Birth of a Nation*.

Everson feels that this Civil War and Reconstruction melodrama, in terms of its sheer audience involvement and its enormous influence on other filmmakers, even as far away as Russia, was "quite possibly the single most important film of all time," an epic that hit with an impact almost impossible to appreciate today, "as if an audience familiar only with comic strips had suddenly been introduced to Tolstoy, and in a way that they could understand." Everson defends Griffith against the frequently made charges of racism, puts forth the film's claim to having garnered the most paid admissions in cinematic history, and in general marvels at Griffith's ability to work on an epic scale completely without a written script, "carrying all of the plot and construction details in his head, and conducting rehearsals by releasing details on the spot."

Yet even this extraordinary man eventually fell on hard times, misjudging his audience, feeling that the post-World War I swing toward sophistication and away from his particular brand




**A C.I.A. cover operation that brought brutality and chaos to South America**

May 7, 1978: The *New York Times* reports on the publication of a new book which affirms charges of C.I.A. illegalities in South America.

June, 1978: Pantheon publishes *Hidden Terrors*, A.J. Langguth's exposé of the C.I.A.'s "public safety advisors," agents who were planted in various South American countries during the 1960's. Their purpose: to abet military coups and to sanction the torture of political enemies.

**"Langguth's storytelling manner of utter reasonableness only underscores the mounting tension and dread."** —*Kirkus Reviews*

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of sentimentality would be only a temporary thing. Griffith lingered on into the sound era, but nothing he did with words equaled his use of cinema when it was silent. Truly, Everson convinces us, a self-contained world passed away when Al Jolson spoke his famous piece, and readers of this book will never again be quite so sure we are unreservedly the better for it.

**Kenneth Turan**

*Kenneth Turan*, film critic for *The Progressive*, is on leave from *The Washington Post*, where he is general culture critic.

# Reconsideration

## Chips of Memory

My career as a movie actor was not long. But it had a certain dramatic unity to it. One line in one scene in one film. No critic gave my performance a bad review, and even today, when the movie is shown on the late-night shows, my appearance is passed over by the viewers in silence, the tribute of their unspeakable satisfaction and surrender.

To explain why I gave up so promising a career, I need to tell the story from the beginning. I was the son of Scottish parents who moved to London, my father having thrown up his patrimony of some of the richest farmland in Scotland to become a journalist, a sin that has been visited upon his son as a punishment. They chose to live in Highgate, once a handsome village just north of London, but by then a suburb. Halfway up Highgate Hill is the spot where Francis Bacon carried out his scientific experiment in refrigeration, stuffing the carcass of a chicken with snow, and catching a cold from which he died, which has always made me question the prudence for which his Essays are renowned.

Not far away is Highgate Cemetery, where both Karl Marx and Radclyffe Hall are buried, although not side by side. The disciples of *Das Kapital* place ornate wreaths on Marx's grave—they obviously get enough out of the book to do well out of the system—while the devotees of *The Well of Loneliness* put knots of violets on its author's tomb. At the top of the Hill, every house seems to have a literary or historical association, especially with the romantics. Coleridge died there, still excitably talking, we must believe, through the last dose. Among such ghosts I was raised.

But my most vivid association is with the schools where I was sent. At the age of five I went to a kindergarten kept by the Misses Legge. The romantics had left their names all over the place, and the kindergarten was called Byron House School. This unfortunate name did not help the Misses Legge to inculcate much seemliness in their little charges. Some years later a girl who was to become a film actress—Elizabeth Tailor, was it, or Elizabeth Tyler?—was also a pupil at the school which by then took anyone. But clearly the Byronic influence was still working strongly.

Under the instruction of the Misses Legge, my Scottish accent was diluted, but it was still noticeable when, at the age of eight, I crossed the road to Highgate School. It was founded in 1565, when English poetry was flowering, as may be seen from the school song:

*In fifteen hundred and sixty-five,*
*When Glorious Bess was still alive,*
*Up Highgate Hill, sedate and slow,*
*As a Lord Chief Justice ought to go,*
*Rode Sir Roger Cholmley—O!*
*Cholmley—O!*
*Cholmley—O!*
*As a Lord Chief Justice ought to go,*
*Rode Sir Roger Cholmley—O!*

He had founded the school, and I am an Old Cholmleian for ever.

Highgate was what the major public schools—rather uninventively—call a minor public school. It had the best traditions of both. The headmaster was a cleric in the Church of England and, true to his orders, appeared before the whole school in various states of intoxication. The birch was frequently laid across our behinds, once across my bare behind, because I had put a football bladder in my shorts to soften the blow. One master had played soccer for the Arsenal, one of the most famous professional teams in London, and was assigned to teach us French. I learned how to say "Le soccer." He also had a habit of breaking open the skin on my knuckles by rapping them with the metal edge of a ruler. The German master used to pull the short hairs at the back of our necks, as he hammered in some metre from Schiller, which prepared us to confront the Nazis. T.S. Eliot once taught English there, which literary critics should take into account.

Year by year my Scottish accent was diluted still more, a fact which appalled my Scottish grandmother. "I dinna ken why your mother abides it." I also did not like losing my accent, but I accepted that this was my lot, and the school did its best with rod and insult.

Then one day our school OTC was taken in buses to MGM's studios at Denham, where they were filming the original version of *Goodbye Mr. Chips*. When the OTC marches off to war in the film it is from Highgate. In the Christmas holidays, the studio called again. The crowd scenes were being done by boys from Dr. Barnado's Home, one of the largest orphanages in London, but unfortunately they did not have the right accents for the small speaking parts. Could the school gather a reserve of about 24 boys, between the heights of 5'4" and 5'8", from which the studio could draw the number it needed each day?

The responsibility fell on me as the boy in charge of the dramatic society. (I was only 13 at the time but the remains of my Scottish accent had enabled me to give a convincing performance as the Second Witch in *Macbeth*.) I chose the schoolfriends whom I liked. Boys who did not usually speak to me began to come round to my home. I told them not to call me, I would call them. Each day we were collected by a studio bus at about 5:30 a.m., and before we were taken home in the evening the casting director told me how many boys were needed the next day. This meant that I stood up in the bus—gazing indifferently at the cherubic faces—and singled out the six who would be collected in the morning.

They were paid £1 a day, which was riches to a schoolboy then, while I earned £2 as the organizer. I of course also went every day, and that Christmas earned about £50. If I had stuck to being a casting director, I would now have a house on Malibu Beach.

They were filming two other movies at Denham at the time. One of them was *The Four Feathers*, that magnificent story of heroism and cowardice in the Sudan



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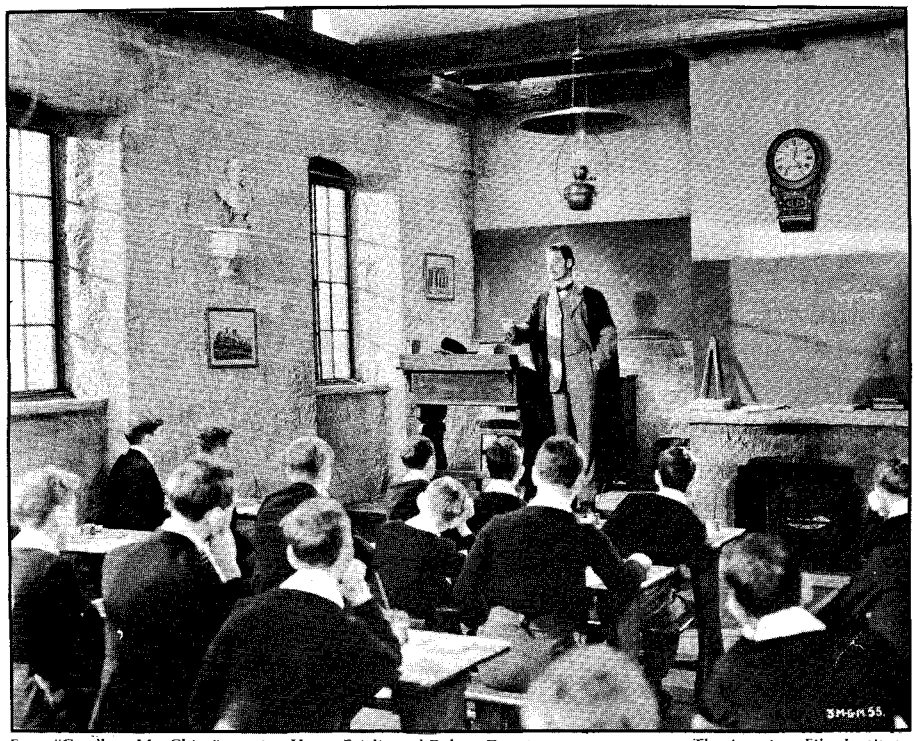
after Gordon's death, on which Alexander Korda of course spared neither money nor his fertile imagination. But it created a hazard for us. Dressed in our Eton suits and collars, we would be ordered from our dressing rooms to the set. We would thread our way through the labyrinthine studios, suddenly to find ourselves surrounded by a thousand dancing dervishes of the Mahdi, while Ralph Richardson stood alone and at bay on some promontory. It was all that I could do to keep my small band together, and get it to the right set where Robert Donat was preparing a Latin lesson.



From "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" starring Henry Fairlie and Robert Donat — The American Film Institute

Robert Donat was infinitely kind to us—Greer Garson was more standoffish, but then the leers of schoolboys must be tiresome—and he often ate with us in the cafeteria. When he was made up in the morning as an old man, he acted as an old man throughout the day, even when he was off the set. He explained that he had been brought up on the stage, and that he could not get used to slipping in and out of a part for the short takes in making a movie, so often at lunch he would cup his ear and say, "Eh? Can't hear you, Fairlie. Speak up, eh!"

I was showing the organizing genius of a Carnot, keeping the egos of 24 budding stars in rein, but I suddenly realized that, because of my duties, I was not being given a line, whereas the boy Webber, whom I had almost not chosen anyhow, had already had three lines. I went to the casting director with whom I had some leverage, since he relied on me to keep the other boys under my thumb, and said that I could not promise to go on if I did not get a line. "All right, Fairlie, you'll have one."

He was true to his word. One line, no more. It was handed to me the night before the shooting. I was to run into Robert Donat as the old Mr. Chips in a doorway, lift my cap and look up at him and say "I thought you were away for the hols, sir!" You may think that such a line is easy to memorize, especially when you have had to learn the whole of *The Ancient Mariner* in one night. But memorizing is not the whole of acting. When many years later I told my story to Peter Finch, he agreed that the two "s's" running together between "hols" and "sir" would have tested the enunciation of Laurence Olivier. I practiced the line all night, before a mirror, and was silent on the bus in the morning.

At last the moment had arrived. I had drawn a clean suit and collar and cap from the costume room. I went to the set. This was not a crowd scene. I was alone with Robert Donat. I was starring. The American director, Sam Wood, was in his canvas chair. He took no notice of me. Behind him sat a rather prim man, on the back of whose chair were the words, "Adviser on English Public Schools." I was placed on one side of the doorway, my co-star on the other. The clapper board clapped: "Scene 76. Take One." I sprang to the doorway, met the billowing gown of Mr. Chips, lifted my cap and said, "I thought you were away for the hols, sir!"

Sam Wood's voice rang out. "Cut!" The cameras stopped whirring. The lights were cut. Everyone in the studio looked at Sam Wood. I felt they were looking at me. What had I done wrong? Sam Wood turned over his shoulder to the Adviser on English Public Schools: "Do they have Scotch boys in English public schools?" (He would say Scotch, which is a drink.) My accent had betrayed me, even though it was now barely noticeable. My line would be taken from me. But the Adviser on English Public Schools nodded that they did indeed have Scots boys.

Lights! Roll cameras! "Scene 76. Take 2." I repeated my performance, and looked again at Mr. Chips: "I thought you were away for the hols, sir!" Again the voice rang out: "Cut!" I waited for the judgment. It came: "But do they have little Highlanders like this?" The Adviser on English Public Schools, who was in fact the classics master at Rugby, stirred in his chair, but not so much as to disturb his languor: "Yes, we have them. In fact it is one of the functions of the English public school, Mr. Wood, to take the barbarous accent out of little savages like him." My pride was wounded. My heart black with fierce hate. But my line was saved.

"Scene 76. Take 3," and in a flash it was all over. Robert Donat said later that it had been a pleasure playing opposite me. I replied that I had felt the same. Keep your wits about you and you will see me and hear the line when next you see the film. I am also in the choir in another scene, but that was not a speaking part. One of the other scenes in which the camera was fixed on me and the detestable Webber for some time was cut from the final version. But there I am in celluloid in what *The Filmgoer's Companion* calls an "immensely successful" movie. Who made it so, I ask you.

If I had answered my Scottish blood as it rose in my veins, I would of course have drawn my dirk from my sock and plunged it into the breast of the classics master from Rugby, but I had to think of my career as a film star. In the event, as my father gave up his rich farms, to become a journalist, so did I give up my career in the movies, to follow him to Grub Street. The sacrifice may seem to have been foolish. But I can always console myself with what might have been.

Playing opposite Elizabeth Tiler: two stars from Byron House.

**Henry Fairlie**



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# The Back of the Book

## The Art of Movie-Going

Everybody knows that movies are an art, but few acknowledge that going to the movies is also an art, the development of which takes years of practice. I've been going to movies from the age of five. My first film was *A Night at the Opera*—a fact which my friends feel explains much of my subsequent life. Since that time I have fallen into certain habits of movie-going which gradually evolved into rules. I'm happy to share these here, along with occasional autobiographical notes on how the rules were formulated.

1) *Where to sit.* There are only four good seats from which to see a movie: five rows back from the screen, on either aisle in the center section, or on the other side of the same aisle in the side section. Aisle seats allow you to swing your legs to the side instead of standing when someone wants to get by, of course, and they make it easier to go get something to eat (see below). But the advantages of these particular seats are angle and distance. From them you actually see more of the screen than from the center, because your eyes are not straining toward opposite peripheries simultaneously. And the distance is just right for allowing you to lose yourself in a picture without being overwhelmed by it. Naturally, sitting so near the screen is bad for the eyes, but that's why these seats are usually available.

2) *How to sit.* You really have little choice in this matter, since sitting up close requires a reverse-crouch, even in those theaters with carpets on the walls that have soft sliding chairs. Just brace your legs on the chair in front of you, and shift your trunk forward until most of your weight is concentrated on your coccyx. I perfected this position as a kid in New York when trying to avoid being sent back to the children's section. All the New York theaters had such a section, in which every kid but I was named Tony, and which was patrolled by a 200-pound "matron" whose job it was to confiscate cigarettes, break up fights and scream "shut up." After a couple of years in the children's section, I learned to sneak into the adult zone, where I developed my crouch. Even so, I was usually caught. Once I claimed I had a deadly disease, and did not wish to contaminate the other children. The matron smiled eagerly, and sent me back.

3) *What to eat.* This is a question of personal preference, but my advice is to stay clear of Jujubes, Starbursts, Milk Duds, Twizzlers, Dots, Sno-caps, Goobers and Necco wafers. Some theaters nowadays specialize in packets of health foods—seeds and nuts—which are okay if you like that stuff, but which always suggest a cultural message to me. I prefer Chunkie, Raisinettes, popcorn (buttered), and best of all, Reese's peanut butter cups—which I believe got their start in movie houses before going national. Try to get the large size Reese's. The small goes down in one bite, and you barely taste the chocolate.

4) *When to go.* Without exception, the best time to go to the movies is between five and six p.m. on weekdays; the next best being the same hour on Sundays. That's when you find the least crowds, the most serious movie-goers, and the fewest kids. Avoid Saturdays if possible, because kids will go to the movies at all times on Saturdays, and unfortunately there no longer are children's sections to contain them. (If you must go on Saturday, wear old pants and shoes without ridged soles.) Under no circumstances take your children to special children's shows. If they insist on seeing something like *The Shaggy D.A.*, find a theater where it's playing with *Misty Beethoven*.

5) *What theater to pick* (important). Usually you're not forced to choose between a theater and a movie, because the best houses show the best films. But the best houses are going fast. All the best places in New York are either going or gone: Loew's Lexington on 51st, where there was a pool of giant goldfish in the lobby and balconies piled to the roof; Loew's Paradise in the Bronx, with flickering lights in the domed ceiling; the Academy of Music, a converted opera house on East 14th, with its boxes reserved for kings.

Choose an old theater if you can find one—one that was built when they still worried about movies being low culture. Lacking that, choose places like the Biograph, the K-B MacArthur, the Uptown, or the Circle Theaters in Washington, where the owners show some feeling for movie-going. The purpose of a movie, at least a good one, is to bring you close to the truth, which usually requires an excursion to the past. To watch a movie in an insistently modern setting goes against the grain.

6) *How many at once.* Nowadays seeing one movie is preferable to a double feature. That's mainly because double features today mean reruns, which usually mean two good, sometimes excellent, movies; and the excellences compete. In the old days a double feature meant one good movie accompanied by a lousy one, which allowed you to luxuriate in the art of movie-going, more than in the movies themselves. Of course, the best thing was a "continuous performance" con-

Carole Lombard (1940) by John Engstead



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sisting of short features such as Pete Smith specials, newsreels, cartoons (five or six), and two long adventure movies, at least one starring Sabu. I sat through *Kim* four times, and walked home cockeyed. But that was when they made movies like *Kim*—which brings us to

7) *What to see.* There's a finite number of movies worth seeing, and the rest aren't; so I'll just present a list:

All Alfred Hitchcock movies, except the abominable *Mountain Eagle, Topaz* and *Torn Curtain; The Winslow Boy; The Maltese Falcon; The Asphalt Jungle; Some Like It Hot;* all Alec Guinness movies except *The Swan; Singin' in the Rain; The Wizard of Oz; Humoresque; Stairway to Heaven;* no Gregory Peck movies (except those made for Hitchcock); all Marx Brothers pictures; all movies made of Dickens novels except *Quilp;* all Tracy-Hepburns except *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner;* all Ernst Lubitsch except *That Lady in Ermine;* all W.C. Fields; *It Happened One Night; Twenty-three Paces to Baker Street; Nightmare Alley; The Third Man; Double Indemnity;* all Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes movies; all William Powell-Myrna Loy "Thin Man" movies; all Peter Lorre movies before and including *Silk Stockings;* most of the movies of Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Hope and Crosby, Jean Harlow, Ronald Coleman, Herbert Marshall, Bette Davis, Charles Laughton, Barbara Stanwick, Leslie Howard, Robert Donat, James Mason, Edward G. Robinson, George Arliss, Madeleine Carroll, Cecil Parker, Alastair Sim, Claude Rains, and the Barrymores; all the movies of Fred Astaire up to and including *Notorious Landlady;* all of Orson Welles up to and including *Touch of Evil;* no Rod Steiger, especially *The Pawnbroker;* and all of Carole Lombard, including stills.

Finally, *how to leave.* Leaving a theater after a movie is like ascending from the underworld, so you must move carefully, and take the incline as if you were walking in a procession. You are about to re-enter reality, which is no joke, and you must try to hold it off as long as possible. Look neither to the right nor left, but straight ahead or a little down. Above all, speak to no one. You have nothing to say you wish to hear.

**Roger Rosenblatt**


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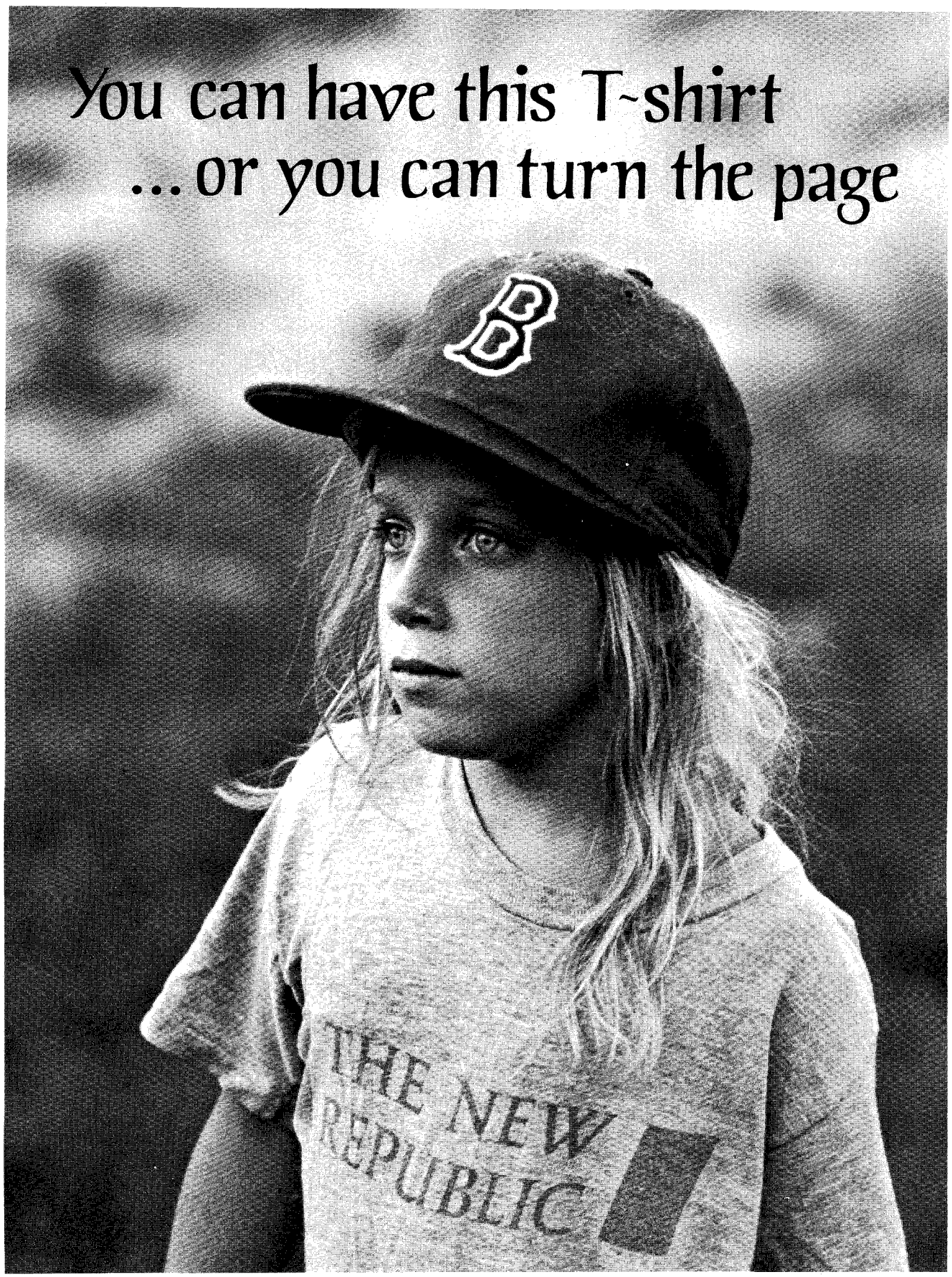


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**Hollywood is not** really Hollywood, but a metaphor for Beverly Hills and various points west which do not include Hollywood itself. Paramount alone among the studios juts down a long finger toward the entertainment capital of 50 years ago, where the seedy bars and sex shops have now taken over from the great dream machines. They no longer perch on stools at Schwab's drugstore awaiting the moment, though some still dare hope that serving tables or parking cars will get them a shot at the big prize, or at any prize at all. And they need not aim at the movies; television is as good a place to start, is steadier work, and is at least as remunerative. If the prize is snared, it most likely comes with a house on or near Gloria Swanson's Sunset Boulevard. The big deals are also made in Beverly Hills or one of its mini-annexes, where the moguls and their attorneys have built cities of glass, sufficient unto themselves or at least wholly independent of Los Angeles proper. "I haven't been downtown in at least three years," a lawyer friend confided to me. "Nothing at all ever happens there." This is not exactly what you'd call an accurate statement. It's just that LA has alienated its populations from one another more successfully than most other big cities. But the separation is not complete. On Rodeo Drive and into the canyons, there are still tidings from the other races and classes—tidings brought daily by the armies of domestics who keep residential Hollywood functioning in its new locations stretching towards the sea.

**People don't walk** much in Los Angeles, certainly not where my friends live. It's not that they'd get mugged, but that the police might pick them up for loitering or some other such legal label for unconventional behavior. Folk around here barely even window shop, though on a few blocks there are boutiques and stores at least as stylish as those on Rome's Via Condotti or Paris's Faubourg St. Honoré. Prices range from very high to simply outlandish, a category particularly noticeable in the new spate of shops that specialize in used and "funky" clothes. A loud Hawaiian shirt, vintage Harry Truman, goes for $85, which is also the cost of a piece of silk left-over, usable as a belt. There are also some book shops, well stocked and more than adequately patronized. It's an odd town in some ways, but it's far from brainless. But the brainy types don't come together as a cohort; they do their own thing in "silence, exile and cunning"—which is how it's best done anyway.

**Like the faces** of the stars, people's other possessions are not supposed to age. My eyes tell me that there are more new automobiles on the road in LA than anywhere else I have been. But it's not only that: there are more Rolls Royces, Jaguars, Mercedes Benzes than I had imagined existed anywhere. Late one afternoon I waited for a friend at the corner of Wilshire and Beverly Boulevards. She was 15 minutes late; during that time I counted nearly 20 Rolls Royces, most of them gold-hued. I would have thought this was nearly half of those available in all of Christendom. Perhaps it is, but I'm told that at any rate there are many times more than that in Islam. People's houses are not always new, but they're often new to their owners. There's more residential mobility, too, in this town than anywhere I've been, or at least more "for sale" signs. Apparently, though, the signs don't necessarily mean that the houses really are on the market. "People put their houses up," someone said, "mostly to see what they're worth." When the owner is satisfied that the house is worth more than the last time it was put up, down goes the sign and everyone lives smugly ever after till the next big bull market in real estate. It's not thought right to gawk at houses, except from those tour buses expressly taking tourists past the "homes of the stars." But there's one house that everyone looks at: the mansion of a 22-year-old Saudi sheikh and his bride. They bought it for $2.5 million, and spent seven million dollars refurbishing. The sheikh's father finally got annoyed at the bad publicity, sent the couple back home and then invited the neighbors in last week—and thousands came to examine this monument of bad taste decorated with pots of plastic flowers in an area where bougainvillea and orchids can be had with slightest effort of the thumb.

**I went to a party** in Malibu at a magnificent home where the folk had a lot to celebrate, including the passage of Proposition 13, which drives real estate taxes way down, so far way down, in fact, that real estate values are bound to go way way up. Proposition 13 will save my host more money next year than a whole block full of middle-class homeowners Howard Jarvis claimed to be speaking for. But wealthy California liberals are a breed apart, and they seem not to relish their windfall. One of the guests was Governor Jerry Brown, who struck me as more sensible, more down-to-earth, more genuine than I had been led to expect, by articles in this journal, among other sources. I am no expert in California politics, so I was his to be persuaded. Nothing he said was a flight into mysticism. The woman he was with, Linda Ronstadt, rock success *par excellence*, neither dazzled him nor tried to dazzle us, and that's good taste in stars. Brown is in political trouble this fall. If Jimmy Carter finds this prospect consoling, he shouldn't. If Brown were to go down to defeat in his November race against a reactionary mannequin (or if Hugh Carey of New York does so) it would be bad news for all Democrats, an awful harbinger for 1980. Brown's particular dilemma is that, having gone down the line against the Jarvis amendment, he now seems to be saying that there won't be that much dislocation in meeting its requirements. Well if that's the case, many voters will be asking, "Why was he against it in the first place?"

**Left politics in Hollywood** are like bad guests: they come late and stay late. At the opening of Vanessa Redgrave's *The Palestinians*, political Hollywood tooled up to the theater in their late-model Mercedes 450 SLs and stepped out in late-1960s embroidered blue jean chic, his and hers. They apparently were deeply moved, particularly when Miss Redgrave, London's most renowned Trotskyite, seemed able to mesh military and erotic imagery. Now that the ERA is just about to expire there was a big movieland bash for the cause, which elicited very little money but a pledge of two million dollars from *Nashville* director Robert Altman, "to come," he said, "from the profits of my next movie." One rogue said that there weren't going to be such profits, and if there were they'd come much too late. Journalist Ben Stein will soon be publishing *The View from Sunset Boulevard* (Basic). He'll argue there that the image of American life as portrayed on television comes less from reality than from the distorted views of an elite of guilt-ridden Los Angeles-based writers and producers, each with his or her own axe to grind. Q.E.D.

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